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A VICTORIAN ANTHOLOGY

1837

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1837–1895

Edited by Edmund Clarence Stedman

Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey

Volume I.

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A

VICTORIAN ANTHOLOGY

1837–1895

SELECTIONS ILLUSTRATING THE EDITOR'S CRITICAL REVIEW OF BRITISH POETRY IN THE REIGN OF VICTORIA

EDITED BY

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

AUTHOR OF "VICTORIAN POETS," ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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To

ELLEN MACKAY HUTCHINSON

INTRODUCTION

WHILE this book is properly termed an Anthology, its scope is limited to the yield of one nation during a single reign. Its compiler's office is not that of one who ranges the whole field of English poetry, from the ballad period to our own time, — thus having eight centuries from which to choose his songs and idyls, each "round and perfect as a star." This has been variously essayed; once, at least, in such a manner as to render it unlikely that any new effort, for years to come, will better the result attained.

On the other hand, the present work relates to the poetry of the English people, and of the English tongue, that knight peerless among languages, at this stage of their manifold development. I am fortunate in being able to make use of such resources for the purpose of gathering, in a single yet inclusive volume, a Victorian garland fairly entitled to its name. The conditions not only permit but require me — while choosing nothing that does not further the general plan — to be somewhat less rigid and eclectic than if examining the full domain of English poesy. That plan is not to offer a collection of absolutely flawless poems, long since become classic and accepted as models; but in fact to make a truthful exhibit of the course of song during the last sixty years, as shown by the poets of Great Britain in the best of their shorter productions.

Otherwise, and as the title-page implies, this Anthology is designed to supplement my "Victorian Poets," by choice and typical examples of the work discussed in that review. These are given in unmutilated form, except that, with respect to a few extended narrative or dramatic pieces, I do not hesitate to make extracts which are somewhat complete in themselves; it being difficult otherwise to represent certain names, and yet desirable that they shall be in some wise represented.

At first I thought to follow a strictly chronological method: that is, to give authors succession in the order of their birth-dates; but had not gone far before it was plain that such an arrangement conveyed no true idea of the poetic movement

within the years involved. It was disastrously inconsistent with the course taken in the critical survey now familiar to readers of various editions since its original issue in 1875 and extension in 1887. In that work the leading poets, and the various groups and "schools," are examined for the most part in the order of their coming into vogue. Some of the earlier-born published late in life, or otherwise outlasted their juniors, and thus belong to the later rather than the opening divisions of the period. In the end, I conformed to the plan shown in the ensuing "Table of Contents." This, it will be perceived, is first set off into three divisions of the reign, and secondly into classes of poets, — which in each class, finally, are quoted in order of their seniority. For page-reference, then, the reader will not depend upon the "Contents," but turn to the Indexes of Authors, First Lines, and Titles, at the end of the volume.

It is an arbitrary thing, at the best, to classify poets, like song-birds, into genera and species; nor is this attempted at all in my later division, which aims to present them chronologically. Time itself, however, is a pretty logical curator, and at least decides the associations wherewith we invest the names of singers long gone by. Those so individual as to fall into no obvious alliance are called "distinctive," in the first and middle divisions at large. Song and hymn makers, dramatists, meditative poets, etc., are easily differentiated, and the formation of other groups corresponds with that outlined in "Victorian Poets." Upon the method thus adopted, and with friendly allowance for the personal equation, it seems to me that a conspectus of the last sixty years can be satisfactorily obtained. The shorter pieces named in my critical essays, as having distinction, are usually given here. While representing the poetic leaders most fully, I have not overlooked choice estrays, and I have been regardful of the minor yet significant drifts by which the tendencies of any literary or artistic generation frequently are discerned. In trying to select the best and most characteristic pieces, one sometimes finds, by a paradox, that an author when most characteristic is not always at his best. On the whole, and nearly always with respect to the elder poets whose work has undergone long sifting, poems well known and favored deserve their repute; and preference has not been given, merely for the sake of novelty, to inferior productions. Authors who were closely held to task in the critical volume are represented, in the Anthology, by their work least open to criticism. Finally, I believe that all those discussed in the former book, whether as objects of extended review or as minor contemporaries, are represented here, except a few that have failed to justify their promise or have produced little suited to such a collection. In addition, a showing

is made of various poets hopefully come to light since the extension of my survey, in 1887. Others of equal merit, doubtless, are omitted, but with youth on their side they may well await the recognition of future editors.

This Introduction goes beyond the scope of the usual Preface, in order that those who (as students of English poetry) avail themselves of the Anthology, and who have but a limited knowledge of the modern field, may readily understand the general and secondary divisions. To such readers a word concerning the period may be of interest.

In a letter to the editor, Canon Dixon speaks of "the Victorian Period" as "one of the longest in literary history; perhaps the longest." With regard to an individual, or to a reign, length of years is itself an aid to distinction, through its prolongation of a specific tendency or motive. The reign now closing has been one in which a kingdom has become an empire; its power has broadened and its wealth and invention have increased as never before. In science, — and in works of the imagination, despite the realistic stress of journalism, — twenty years of the recent era outvie any fifty between the Protectorate and the beginning of our century. During every temporary lull we fear sterility, but one need not confine his retrospection to the blank from 1700 to 1795 to be assured that an all-round comparison with the past must be in our favor. While, then, it is but a hazardous thing to estimate one's own day, the essays to which the Anthology is a complement would not have been written but for a conviction that the time under review was destined to rank with the foremost times of England's intellectual activity,— to be classed, it well might be, among the few culminating eras of European thought and art, as one to which even the title of "Age" should be applied. We speak of Queen Anne's time; of the Georgian Period, and we have epochs within periods; but we say the Age of Pericles, the Augustan Age, the Elizabethan Age, and it is not beyond conjecture that posterity may award the master epithet to the time of Carlyle and Froude, of Mill and Spencer and Darwin, of Dickens, Thackeray, and their successors, of Tennyson and Browning, — and thus not only for its wonders of power, science, invention, but for an imaginative fertility unequalled since "the spacious days" of the Virgin Queen. The years of her modern successor, whose larger sway betokens such an evolution, have been so prolonged, and so beneficent under the continuous wisdom of her statesmen, that the present reign may find no historic equal in centuries to come. An instinctive recognition of this seems now to prevail. Even the adjective "Victorian" was unfamiliar, if it had been employed at all, when I used it in the title of a magazine essay (the germ of my subsequent

volume) published in January, 1873. It is now as well in use as "Elizabethan" or "Georgian," and advisedly, for the cycle bearing the name has so rounded upon itself that an estimate of its characteristic portion can be made *ab extra;* all the more, because in these latter days "the thoughts of men" are not only "widened," but hastened toward just conclusions, as if in geometrical progression. What, then, my early essays found an ample ground for study, the present compilation seeks to illustrate, and I trust that, although restricted to brief exemplifications, it will somewhat justify this preliminary claim.

In the following pages, then, the period is divided into, first, the early years of the reign; second, the Victorian epoch proper; third, the present time. A survey of the opening division brings out an interesting fact. Of the poets cited as prominent after 1835 and until the death of Wordsworth, scarcely one shows any trace of the artistic and speculative qualities which are essentially Victorian. Well-informed readers may be surprised to find so many antedating the influence of Tennyson, untouched by his captivating and for a long time dominating style. Their work is that of a transition era, holding over into the present reign. It was noted for its songs and sentiment. The feeling of Wordsworth is plain in its meditative verse; yet to this time belong Bulwer, Macaulay, the "Blackwood" and "Bentley" coteries, "Barry Cornwall," and those "strayed Elizabethans," Darley and Beddoes. Milman, Talfourd, Knowles, and others are not quoted, partly on account of their lack of quality, but chiefly because at their best they are late Georgian rather than early Victorian. Praed comes in as the pioneer of our society-verse; Elliott as a bard of "the new day." In fact, the Reform Bill crisis evoked the humanitarian spirit, poetically at its height in the writings of Hood and Mrs. Browning. To include Wordsworth, the Queen's first laureate of her own appointment, farther than by a prelude on "the passing of the elder bards" would be to rob the Georgian Period of the leader of one of its great poetic movements; yet Wordsworth breathes throughout our entire selection, wherever Nature is concerned, or philosophic thought, and not only in the contemplative verse, but in the composite, and never more strenuously than in Palgrave and Arnold, of the middle division, and such a poet as Watson, of the third. Landor, though the comrade of Southey, the foil of Byron, and the delight of Shelley, begins this volume, as he began its predecessor; for Landor with his finish, his classical serenity, and his wonderful retention of the artistic faculty until his death — a score of years after the Accession — belonged to no era more than to our own, — and we may almost say that in poetry he and Swinburne were of the same generation.

Two thirds of our space are naturally required for selections from the typical division. This is seen to begin with the appointment of Tennyson as laureate, since he scarcely had a following until about that date. In him we find, on the reflective side, a sense of Nature akin to Wordsworth's, and on the æsthetic, an artistic perfection foretokened by Keats, — in other words, insight and taste united through his genius had their outcome in the composite idyllic school, supremely representative of the Victorian prime. Tennyson idealized the full advance of nineteenth century speculation, ethical and scientific, in the production of "In Memoriam," and to the end in such a poem as "Vastness." Possibly, also, it was out of his early mediæval romanticism that the next most striking school arose with Rossetti and his fellow Pre-Raphaelites who are grouped as Poets of the Renaissance: their revival including both Greek and Gothic modes and motives, as finally combined in the masterwork of Swinburne. The third and equal force of the epoch is that of Browning, long holding his rugged ground alone, as afterward with half the world to stay him; but, like other men of unique genius, not the founder of a school, — his manner failing in weaker hands. In Arnold's composite verse the reflective prevails over the æsthetic. Besides these chiefs of the quarter-century are various "distinctive" poets, as in the earlier division, each belonging to no general group. Then we have the songsters, for whom all of us confess a kindly feeling; the balladists withal, and the dramatists, — such as they are; also the makers of lighter verse, and other lyrists of a modest station, often yielding something that lends a special grace to an Anthology.

The closing era is of the recent poets of Great Britain, and begins very clearly about twenty years ago. At that date, the direct influences of Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, and Rossetti began to appear less obviously, or were blended, where apparent, in the verse of a younger generation. The new lyrists had motives of their own, and here and there a new note. There was a lighter touch, a daintiness of wit and *esprit*, a revival of early minstrel "forms," and every token of a blithe and courtly Ecole Intermédiaire: evidence, at least, of emancipation from the stress of the long dominant Victorian chord. The change has become decisive since the "Jubilee Year," to which my supplementary review was extended, and of late we have a distinctly lyrical, though minor song-burst, even if the mother country be not, as in its springtime of pleasant minstrelsy, "a nest of singing-birds." In the later ditties England's hawthorn-edged lanes and meadows come to mind, the skylark carols, and we have verse as pastoral as Mr. Abbey's drawings for Herrick and Goldsmith. This, to my view, if not very great, is more genuine and

hopeful than any further iteration of "French Forms," and the same may be occasionally said for those town-lyrics which strive to express certain garish, wandering phases of the London of to-day. Irish verse, which always has had quality, begins to take on art. But the strongest recent work is found in the ballads of a few men and women, and of these balladists, one born out of Great Britain is first without a seeming effort. As for the drama (considering the whole reign), its significant poetry, beyond a few structures modelled after the antique, and those of Horne, Taylor, and Swinburne, is found mainly in the peculiar and masterful work of Browning; nevertheless, lyrical song indicates a dramatic inspiration, because it is so human, and if the novel did not afford a continuous exercise of the dramatic gift, I would look to see the drama, or verse with pronounced dramatic qualities, attend the rise of the next poetic school. If, on the other hand, there is to ensue a non-imaginative era, a fallow interval, it will be neither strange nor much to be deplored after the productive affluence of the reign now ending with the century.

A selection from the minstrelsy of Great Britain's colonies fills out the scheme of the Anthology. The Australian yield is sufficiently meagre, but I have chosen what seems most local and characteristic. Canada is well in the lists with a group of lyrists whose merit has made their names familiar to readers of our own periodicals, and who feel and healthfully express the sentiment, the atmosphere, of their northern land. I am sure that the space reserved for them in this volume will not seem ill-bestowed. One noteworthy trait of colonial poetry is the frequency with which it takes the ballad form. In a rude way this is seen in the literature of our own colonial period, and along our more recent frontier settlements. By some law akin to that which makes balladry — repeated from mouth to mouth — the natural song of primitive man, of the epic youth of a race or nation, so its form and spirit appear to characterize the verse of a people not primitive, though the colonial pioneers of life and literature in a new land.

To a few exquisite but unnamed quatrains and lyrics by Landor, I have prefixed the felicitous titles given to them by Mr. Aldrich in the little book "Cameos," of which he and I were the editors a score of years ago. From the early minstrels a compiler's selections are not hard to make. The panel already has been struck by time itself, which declares that, even in the case of some uneven roisterer, one or two fortunate catches shall preserve his name. More embarrassment comes from the knowledge that lovers of such poets as Tennyson, who made no imperfect poem, and Browning, who wrote none that was meaningless, are slow to understand why certain pieces, for which an editor, doubtless, shares their own regard, are

perforce omitted. To surmise, moreover, which is the one lasting note of a new voice or which of all the younger band is to win renown, this is the labor and the work, seeing that as to finish they are all sensitive enough, except now and then one who invites attention by contempt for it. Nothing is more evident than the good craftsmanship of latter-day English and American verse-makers, — a matter of course, after the object-lessons given by their immediate forbears. All in all, the anthologist must rest his cause upon its good intention. In speaking of those who hunt up and reprint the faulty work of authors, — "the imperfect thing or thought" which in mature years they have tried to suppress, — Palgrave justly says in his "Pro Mortuis," —

> "Nor has the dead worse foe than he
> Who rakes these sweepings of the artist's room,
> And piles them on his tomb."

Conversely, one perhaps earns some right to count himself the artist's friend, whose endeavor is to discover and preserve, from the once cherished treasures of even a humble fellow of the craft, at least "one gem of song, defying age."

Compact Biographical Notes, upon all the poets represented, follow the main text. Where authorities conflict, and usually, also, in the cases of recent authors, effort has been made to secure the desired information at first hand. For this, and for the general result, my hearty thanks are due to the skill and patience of Miss Vernetta E. Coleman, who has prepared the greater portion of the Notes. The faithfulness of the text at large has been enhanced by the coöperation of the Riverside Press, and this is not the first time when I have been grateful to its Corrector and his assistants for really critical attention given to a work passing through their hands.

E. C. S.

New York, *September*, 1895.

NOTE

For the text of the selections in this Anthology, transcripts have been made, as far as possible, from the books of the respective authors, many of which volumes are upon the editor's shelves. Much dependence, however, has been placed on the Astor, Mercantile, Columbia College, and Society Libraries, and the Library of the Y. W. C. Association. To the librarians of these institutions the editor's acknowledgments are rendered for courteous assistance. His thanks are due, also, to Mr. R. H. Stoddard, Mr. R. W. Gilder, Prof. Brander Matthews, and Prof. F. D. Sherman, of New York, Mr. Harrison S. Morris, of Philadelphia, Mr. G. H. Ellwanger, of Rochester, and Prof. C. G. D. Roberts, late of Windsor, N. S., for giving him the use of their collections, and to a few other friends for various services. With respect to attractive single poems, and to authors whose original editions could not be obtained, he has found the eight volumes of Mr. Miles's "The Poets and the Poetry of the Century" welcome aids to his research. Use also has been made of Mr. Sharp's "Canterbury Poets" series, Prof. Sladen's "Australian Poets," Mr. Schuyler-Lighthall's "Songs of the Great Dominion," and of several minor collections of Scottish, Irish, and English-dialect verse.

His thanks are rendered to many living British poets, who now, under the amended copyright law, are so closely affiliated with us, for the privilege cheerfully given of taking his own selections from their works. This usufruct has been generously confirmed by the publishers issuing their American editions. The editor desires to express his grateful obligations to Messrs. Macmillan & Co. and Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., of London and New York; to Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, Messrs. Dodd, Mead & Co., Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons, and the Frederick A. Stokes Company, of New York; to Messrs. Roberts Brothers and Messrs. Copeland & Day, of Boston; and to Messrs. Stone & Kimball and Messrs. Way & Williams, of Chicago.

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I

EARLY YEARS OF THE REIGN

(TRANSITION PERIOD)

CLOSE OF SOUTHEY'S LAUREATESHIP: 1837-43
LAUREATESHIP OF WORDSWORTH: 1843-50

Accession of Victoria R., June 20, 1837

THE PASSING OF THE ELDER BARDS

FROM THE "EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG"

THE mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;
And death upon the braes of Yarrow
Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source;

The 'rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth:
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land!

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
"Who next will drop and disappear?"

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

November, 1835.

EARLY YEARS OF THE REIGN

(TRANSITION PERIOD)

DISTINCTIVE POETS AND DRAMATISTS

Walter Savage Landor

OVERTURE

FROM "THRASYMEDES AND EUNOË"

WHO will away to Athens with me? who
Loves choral songs and maidens crown'd with flowers,
Unenvious? mount the pinnace; hoist the sail.
I promise ye, as many as are here,
Ye shall not, while ye tarry with me, taste
From unrins'd barrel the diluted wine
Of a low vineyard or a plant ill prun'd,
But such as anciently the Ægean isles
Pour'd in libation at their solemn feasts:
And the same goblets shall ye grasp, emboss'd
With no vile figures of loose languid boors,
But such as gods have liv'd with and have led.

THE HAMADRYAD

RHAICOS was born amid the hills wherefrom
Gnidos the light of Caria is discern'd,
And small are the white-crested that play near,
And smaller onward are the purple waves.
Thence festal choirs were visible, all crown'd
With rose and myrtle if they were inborn;
If from Pandion sprang they, on the coast
Where stern Athenè rais'd her citadel,
Then olive was entwin'd with violets
Cluster'd in bosses, regular and large;
For various men wore various coronals,
But one was their devotion; 't was to her
Whose laws all follow, her whose smile withdraws
The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from Zeus,
And whom in his chill caves the mutable
Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, reveres,
And whom his brother, stubborn Dis, hath pray'd
To turn in pity the averted cheek
Of her he bore away, with promises,
Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx itself,
To give her daily more and sweeter flowers
Than he made drop from her on Enna's dell.
Rhaicos was looking from his father's door
At the long trains that hasten'd to the town
From all the valleys, like bright rivulets
Gurgling with gladness, wave outrunning wave,
And thought it hard he might not also go
And offer up one prayer, and press one hand,
He knew not whose. The father call'd him in
And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle games;
Long enough I have liv'd to find them so."
And ere he ended, sigh'd; as old men do
Always, to think how idle such games are.

"I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in his heart,
And wanted proof.
"Suppose thou go and help
Echion at the hill, to bark yon oak
And lop its branches off, before we delve
About the trunk and ply the root with axe:
This we may do in winter."
Rhaicos went;
For thence he could see farther, and see more
Of those who hurried to the city-gate.
Echion he found there, with naked arm
Swart-hair'd, strong-sinew'd, and his eyes intent
Upon the place where first the axe should fall:
He held it upright. "There are bees about,
Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious eld,
"Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The youth
Inclin'd his ear, afar, and warily,
And cavern'd in his hand. He heard a buzz
At first, and then the sound grew soft and clear,
And then divided into what seem'd tune,
And there were words upon it, plaintive words.
He turn'd, and said, "Echion! do not strike
That tree: it must be hollow; for some god
Speaks from within. Come thyself near." Again
Both turn'd toward it: and behold! there sat
Upon the moss below, with her two palms
Pressing it, on each side, a maid in form.
Downcast were her long eyelashes, and pale
Her cheek, but never mountain-ash display'd
Berries of color like her lip so pure,
Nor were the anemones about her hair
Soft, smooth, and wavering like the face beneath.
"What dost thou here?" Echion, half-afraid,
Half-angry, cried. She lifted up her eyes,
But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew one step
Backward, for fear came likewise over him,
But not such fear: he panted, gasp'd, drew in
His breath, and would have turn'd it into words,
But could not into one.
"O send away
That sad old man!" said she. The old man went
Without a warning from his master's son,
Glad to escape, for sorely he now fear'd,
And the axe shone behind him in their eyes.
Hamad. And wouldst thou too shed the most innocent
Of blood? No vow demands it; no god wills
The oak to bleed.
Rhaicos. Who art thou? whence? why here?
And whither wouldst thou go? Among the rob'd
In white or saffron, or the hue that most
Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none
Array'd as thou art. What so beautiful
As that gray robe which clings about thee close,
Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to trees,
Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,
As, touch'd by zephyrs, fall and rise the boughs
Of graceful platan by the river-side?
Hamad. Lovest thou well thy father's house?
Rhaicos. Indeed
I love it, well I love it, yet would leave
For thine, where'er it be, my father's house,
With all the marks upon the door, that show
My growth at every birthday since the third,
And all the charms, o'erpowering evil eyes,
My mother nail'd for me against my bed,
And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)
Won in my race last spring from Eutychos.
Hamad. Bethink thee what it is to leave a home
Thou never yet hast left, one night, one day.
Rhaicos. No, 't is not hard to leave it: 't is not hard
To leave, O maiden, that paternal home
If there be one on earth whom we may love
First, last, for ever; one who says that she
Will love for ever too. To say which word,
Only to say it, surely is enough.
It shows such kindness — if 't were possible
We at the moment think she would indeed.
Hamad. Who taught thee all this folly at thy age?
Rhaicos. I have seen lovers and have learn'd to love.
Hamad. But wilt thou spare the tree?
Rhaicos. My father wants

The bark; the tree may hold its place awhile.
Hamad. Awhile? thy father numbers then my days?
Rhaicos. Are there no others where the moss beneath
Is quite as tufty? Who would send thee forth
Or ask thee why thou tarriest? Is thy flock
Anywhere near?
Hamad. I have no flock: I kill
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,
The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful
(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source
Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou never heard
Of Hamadryads?
Rhaicos. Heard of them I have:
Tell me some tale about them. May I sit
Beside thy feet? Art thou not tired? The herbs
Are very soft; I will not come too nigh;
Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor doubt.
Stay, stay an instant: let me first explore
If any acorn of last year be left
Within it; thy thin robe too ill protects
Thy dainty limbs against the harm one small
Acorn may do. Here 's none. Another day
Trust me; till then let me sit opposite.
Hamad. I seat me; be thou seated, and content.
Rhaicos. O sight for gods! ye men below! adore
The Aphroditè! *Is* she there below?
Or sits she here before me? as she sate
Before the shepherd on those heights that shade
The Hellespont, and brought his kindred woe.
Hamad. Reverence the higher Powers; nor deem amiss
Of her who pleads to thee, and would repay —
Ask not how much — but very much. Rise not:
No, Rhaicos, no! Without the nuptial vow
Love is unholy. Swear to me that none
Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,
Then take thou mine; then take it, not before.
Rhaicos. Hearken, all gods above! O Aphroditè!
O Herè! Let my vow be ratified!
But wilt thou come into my father's house?
Hamad. Nay: and of mine I cannot give thee part.
Rhaicos. Where is it?
Hamad. In this oak.
Rhaicos. Ay; now begins
The tale of Hamadryad: tell it through.
Hamad. Pray of thy father never to cut down
My tree; and promise him, as well thou mayst,
That every year he shall receive from me
More honey than will buy him nine fat sheep,
More wax than he will burn to all the gods.
Why fallest thou upon thy face? Some thorn
May scratch it, rash young man! Rise up; for shame!
Rhaicos. For shame I cannot rise. O pity me!
I dare not sue for love — but do not hate!
Let me once more behold thee — not once more,
But many days: let me love on — unlov'd!
I aim'd too high: on my own head the bolt
Falls back, and pierces to the very brain.
Hamad. Go — rather go, than make me say I love.
Rhaicos. If happiness is immortality,
(And whence enjoy it else the gods above?)
I am immortal too: my vow is heard —
Hark! on the left — Nay, turn not from me now,
I claim my kiss.
Hamad. Do men take first, then claim?
Do thus the seasons run their course with them?

Her lips were seal'd; her head sank on his breast.
'T is said that laughs were heard within the wood:
But who should hear them? and whose laughs? and why?

Savory was the smell and long past noon,
Thallinos! in thy house; for marjoram,
Basil and mint, and thyme and rosemary,
Were sprinkled on the kid's well roasted length,
Awaiting Rhaicos. Home he came at last,
Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,
With head and eyes just o'er the maple plate.
"Thou see'st but badly, coming from the sun,

Boy Rhaicos!" said the father. "That oak's bark
Must have been tough, with little sap between;
It ought to run; but it and I are old."
Rhaicos, although each morsel of the bread
Increas'd by chewing, and the meat grew cold
And tasteless to his palate, took a draught
Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he was,
He thought not of, until his father fill'd
The cup, averring water was amiss,
But wine had been at all times pour'd on kid.
It was religion.
He thus fortified
Said, not quite boldly, and not quite abash'd,
"Father, that oak is Zeus's own; that oak
Year after year will bring thee wealth from wax
And honey. There is one who fears the gods
And the gods love — that one"
(He blush'd, nor said
What one)
"Has promis'd this, and may do more.
Thou hast not many moons to wait until
The bees have done their best; if then there come
Nor wax nor honey, let the tree be hewn."
"Zeus hath bestow'd on thee a prudent mind,"
Said the glad sire: "but look thou often there,
And gather all the honey thou canst find
In every crevice, over and above
What has been promis'd; would they reckon that?"

Rhaicos went daily; but the nymph as oft,
Invisible. To play at love, she knew,
Stopping its breathings when it breathes most soft,
Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.
She play'd on his: she fed upon his sighs;
They pleas'd her when they gently wav'd her hair,
Cooling the pulses of her purple veins,
And when her absence brought them out, they pleas'd.
Even among the fondest of them all,
What mortal or immortal maid is more
Content with giving happiness than pain?
One day he was returning from the wood
Despondently. She pitied him, and said
"Come back!" and twin'd her fingers in the hem
Above his shoulder. Then she led his steps
To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand
Through lentisk and through oleander; there
Bath'd she his feet, lifting them on her lap
When bath'd, and drying them in both her hands.
He dar'd complain; for those who most are lov'd
Most dare it; but not harsh was his complaint.
"O thou inconstant!" said he, "if stern law
Bind thee, or will, stronger than sternest law,
O, let me know henceforward when to hope
The fruit of love that grows for me but here."
He spake; and pluck'd it from its pliant stem.
"Impatient Rhaicos! Why thus intercept
The answer I would give? There is a bee
Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my thoughts
And executes my wishes: I will send
That messenger. If ever thou art false,
Drawn by another, own it not, but drive
My bee away: then shall I know my fate,
And — for thou must be wretched — weep at thine.
But often as my heart persuades to lay
Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest,
Expect her with thee, whether it be morn
Or eve, at any time when woods are safe."

Day after day the Hours beheld them blest,
And season after season: years had past,
Blest were they still. He who asserts that Love
Ever is sated of sweet things, the same
Sweet things he fretted for in earlier days,
Never, by Zeus! lov'd he a Hamadryad.

The nights had now grown longer, and perhaps
The Hamadryads find them lone and dull
Among their woods; one did, alas! She call'd
Her faithful bee: 't was when all bees should sleep,
And all did sleep but hers. She was sent forth
To bring that light which never wintry blast
Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,
The light that shines from loving eyes upon

Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.
Rhaicos was sitting at his father's hearth :
Between them stood the table, not o'er-spread
With fruits which autumn now profusely bore,
Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine ; but there
The draft-board was expanded ; at which game
Triumphant sat old Thallinos ; the son
Was puzzled, vex'd, discomfited, distraught.
A buzz was at his ear : up went his hand
And it was heard no longer. The poor bee
Return'd (but not until the morn shone bright)
And found the Hamadryad with her head
Upon her aching wrist, and show'd one wing
Half-broken off, the other's meshes marr'd,
And there were bruises which no eye could see
Saving a Hamadryad's.
At this sight
Down fell the languid brow, both hands fell down,
A shriek was carried to the ancient hall
Of Thallinos : he heard it not : his son
Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.
No bark was on the tree, no leaf was green,
The trunk was riven through. From that day forth
Nor word nor whisper sooth'd his ear, nor sound
Even of insect wing ; but loud laments
The woodmen and the shepherds one long year
Heard day and night ; for Rhaicos would not quit
The solitary place, but moan'd and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O guest,
To find set duly on the hollow stone.

THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA

"Artemidora ! Gods invisible,
While thou art lying faint along the couch,
Have tied the sandal to thy veined feet,
And stand beside thee, ready to convey
Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.
Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness
Away, and voices like thine own come nigh,
Soliciting, nor vainly, thy embrace."
Artemidora sigh'd, and would have press'd
The hand now pressing hers, but was too weak.
Fate's shears were over her dark hair unseen
While thus Elpenor spake : he look'd into
Eyes that had given light and life erewhile
To those above them, those now dim with tears
And watchfulness. Again he spake of joy,
Eternal. At that word, that sad word, *joy*,
Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once more,
Her head fell back : one sob, one loud deep sob
Swell'd through the darken'd chamber ; 't was not hers :
With her that old boat incorruptible,
Unwearied, undiverted in its course,
Had plash'd the water up the farther strand.

FROM "MYRTIS"

Friends, whom she look'd at blandly from her couch
And her white wrist above it, gem-bedew'd,
Were arguing with Pentheusa : she had heard
Report of Creon's death, whom years before
She listen'd to, well-pleas'd ; and sighs arose ;
For sighs full often fondle with reproofs
And will be fondled by them. When I came
After the rest to visit her, she said,
"Myrtis ! how kind ! Who better knows than thou
The pangs of love ? and my first love was he !"
Tell me (if ever, Eros ! are reveal'd
Thy secrets to the earth) have they been true
To any love who speak about the first ?
What ! shall these holier lights, like twinkling stars
In the few hours assign'd them, change their place,
And, when comes ampler splendor, disappear ?
Idler I am, and pardon, not reply,
Implore from thee, thus question'd ; well I know
Thou strikest, like Olympian Jove, but once.

LITTLE AGLAË

TO HER FATHER, ON HER STATUE BEING CALLED LIKE HER

FATHER ! the little girl we see
Is not, I fancy, so like me ;
You never hold her on your knee.

When she came home, the other day,
You kiss'd her ; but I cannot say
She kiss'd you first and ran away.

TO A CYCLAMEN

I COME to visit thee agen,
My little flowerless cyclamen ;
To touch the hand, almost to press,
That cheer'd thee in thy loneliness.
What could thy careful guardian find
Of thee in form, of me in mind,
What is there in us rich or rare,
To make us claim a moment's care ?
Unworthy to be so carest,
We are but withering leaves at best.

DIRCE

STAND close around, ye Stygian set,
With Dirce in one boat convey'd,
Or Charon, seeing, may forget
That he is old, and she a shade.

AN INVOCATION

WE are what suns and winds and waters make us ;
The mountains are our sponsors, and the rills
Fashion and win their nursling with their smiles.
But where the land is dim from tyranny,
There tiny pleasures occupy the place
Of glories and of duties ; as the feet
Of fabled faeries when the sun goes down
Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove by day.
Then Justice, call'd the Eternal One above,
Is more inconstant than the buoyant form
That burst into existence from the froth
Of ever-varying ocean : what is best
Then becomes worst ; what loveliest, most deform'd.
The heart is hardest in the softest climes,
The passions flourish, the affections die.
O thou vast tablet of these awful truths,
That fillest all the space between the seas,
Spreading from Venice's deserted courts
To the Tarentine and Hydruntine mole,
What lifts thee up ? what shakes thee ? 't is the breath
Of God. Awake, ye nations ! spring to life !
Let the last work of his right hand appear
Fresh with his image, Man.

FROM "GEBIR"

TAMAR AND THE NYMPH

"'T WAS evening, though not sunset, and the tide,
Level with these green meadows, seem'd yet higher :
'T was pleasant, and I loosen'd from my neck
The pipe you gave me, and began to play.
O that I ne'er had learn'd the tuneful art !
It always brings us enemies or love.
Well, I was playing, when above the waves
Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend ;
I, sitting still, survey'd it with my pipe
Awkwardly held before my lips half-clos'd.
Gebir ! it was a Nymph ! a Nymph divine !
I cannot wait describing how she came,
How I was sitting, how she first assum'd
The sailor ; of what happen'd there remains
Enough to say, and too much to forget.
The sweet deceiver stepp'd upon this bank
Before I was aware ; for with surprise
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.
Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd reed,
I heard a rustling, and where that arose
My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.
Her feet resembled those long shells explor'd
By him who to befriend his steed's dim sight
Would blow the pungent powder in the eye.
Her eyes too ! O immortal gods ! her eyes
Resembled — what could they resemble ? what
Ever resemble those ? Even her attire
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art :

Her mantle show'd the yellow samphire-pod,
Her girdle the dove-color'd wave serene.
'Shepherd,' said she, 'and will you wrestle now
And with the sailor's hardier race engage?'
I was rejoiced to hear it, and contriv'd
How to keep up contention: could I fail
By pressing not too strongly, yet to press?
'Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,
Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
I am not daunted; no; I will engage.'
'But first,' said she, 'what wager will you lay?'
'A sheep,' I answered: 'add whate'er you will.'
'I cannot,' she replied, 'make that return:
Our hided vessels in their pitchy round
Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.
But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
Within, and they that lustre have imbib'd
In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyok'd
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave:
Shake one and it awakens, then apply
Its polish'd lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.
And I have others given me by the nymphs,
Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have:
But we, by Neptune! for no pipe contend;
This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.'
Now came she forward eager to engage,
But first her dress, her bosom then survey'd
And heav'd it, doubting if she could deceive.
Her bosom seem'd, inclos'd in haze like heaven,
To baffle touch, and rose forth undefin'd;
Above her knee she drew the robe succinct,
Above her breast, and just below her arms.
'This will preserve my breath when tightly bound,
If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.'
Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,
And, rushing at me, clos'd: I thrill'd throughout
And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with cold.
Again with violent impulse gush'd my blood,
And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,
I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein,
Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.
Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms
I clung around her neck; the vest beneath
Rustled against our slippery limbs entwin'd:
Often mine springing with eluded force
Started aside and trembled till replaced:
And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
My bosom and my throat felt so compress'd
That life was almost quivering on my lips.
Yet nothing was there painful: these are signs
Of secret arts and not of human might;
What arts I cannot tell; I only know
My eyes grew dizzy and my strength decay'd;
I was indeed o'ercome — with what regret,
And more, with what confusion, when I reach'd
The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried,
'This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.'
She smil'd, and more of pleasure than disdain
Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,
And eyes that languish'd, lengthening, just like love.
She went away; I on the wicker gate
Leant, and could follow with my eyes alone
The sheep she carried easy as a cloak;
But when I heard its bleating, as I did,
And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet
Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip,
One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd,
Then all my passions mingling fell in tears;
Restless then ran I to the highest ground
To watch her; she was gone; gone down the tide;
And the long moonbeam on the hard wet sand
Lay like a jasper column half uprear'd."

TO YOUTH

WHERE art thou gone, light-ankled Youth?
With wing at either shoulder,
And smile that never left thy mouth
Until the Hours grew colder:

Then somewhat seem'd to whisper near
That thou and I must part;
I doubted it; I felt no fear,
No weight upon the heart.

If aught befell it, Love was by
  And roll'd it off again ;
So, if there ever was a sigh,
  'T was not a sigh of pain.

I may not call thee back ; but thou
  Returnest when the hand
Of gentle Sleep waves o'er my brow
  His poppy-crested wand ;

Then smiling eyes bend over mine,
  Then lips once press'd invite ;
But sleep hath given a silent sign,
  And both, alas ! take flight.

TO AGE

Welcome, old friend ! These many years
  Have we liv'd door by door :
The Fates have laid aside their shears
  Perhaps for some few more.

I was indocile at an age
  When better boys were taught,
But thou at length hast made me sage,
  If I am sage in aught.

Little I know from other men,
  Too little they from me,
But thou hast pointed well the pen
  That writes these lines to thee.

Thanks for expelling Fear and Hope,
  One vile, the other vain ;
One's scourge, the other's telescope,
  I shall not see again :

Rather what lies before my feet
  My notice shall engage.
He who hath brav'd Youth's dizzy heat
  Dreads not the frost of Age.

ROSE AYLMER

Ah what avails the sceptred race,
  Ah what the form divine !
What every virtue, every grace !
  Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
  May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
  I consecrate to thee.

ROSE AYLMER'S HAIR, GIVEN BY HER SISTER

Beautiful spoils ! borne off from vanquish'd death !
  Upon my heart's high altar shall ye lie,
Mov'd but by only one adorer's breath,
  Retaining youth, rewarding constancy.

CHILD OF A DAY

Child of a day, thou knowest not
  The tears that overflow thine urn,
The gushing eyes that read thy lot,
  Nor, if thou knewest, couldst return.
And why the wish ! the pure and blest
  Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.
O peaceful night ! O envied rest !
  Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

FIESOLAN IDYL

Here, where precipitate Spring with one light bound
Into hot Summer's lusty arms expires,
And where go forth at morn, at eve, at night,
Soft airs that want the lute to play with 'em,
And softer sighs that know not what they want,
Aside a wall, beneath an orange-tree,
Whose tallest flowers could tell the lowlier ones
Of sights in Fiesole right up above,
While I was gazing a few paces off
At what they seem'd to show me with their nods,
Their frequent whispers and their pointing shoots,
A gentle maid came down the garden-steps
And gather'd the pure treasure in her lap.
I heard the branches rustle, and stepp'd forth
To drive the ox away, or mule, or goat,
Such I believ'd it must be. How could I
Let beast o'erpower them ? when hath wind or rain
Borne hard upon weak plant that wanted me,
And I (however they might bluster round)

Walk'd off? 'T were most ungrateful: for sweet scents
Are the swift vehicles of still sweeter thoughts,
And nurse and pillow the dull memory
That would let drop without them her best stores.
They bring me tales of youth and tones of love,
And 't is and ever was my wish and way
To let all flowers live freely, and all die
(Whene'er their Genius bids their souls depart)
Among their kindred in their native place.
I never pluck the rose; the violet's head
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank
And not reproach'd me; the ever-sacred cup
Of the pure lily hath between my hands
Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of gold.
I saw the light that made the glossy leaves
More glossy; the fair arm, the fairer cheek
Warm'd by the eye intent on its pursuit;
I saw the foot that, although half-erect
From its gray slipper, could not lift her up
To what she wanted: I held down a branch
And gather'd her some blossoms; since their hour
Was come, and bees had wounded them, and flies
Of harder wing were working their way through
And scattering them in fragments under foot.
So crisp were some, they rattled unevolv'd,
Others, ere broken off, fell into shells,
Unbending, brittle, lucid, white like snow,
And like snow not seen through, by eye or sun:
Yet every one her gown receiv'd from me
Was fairer than the first. I thought not so,
But so she prais'd them to reward my care.
I said, "You find the largest."
"This indeed,"
Cried she, "is large and sweet." She held one forth,
Whether for me to look at or to take
She knew not, nor did I; but taking it
Would best have solv'd (and this she felt) her doubt.
I dar'd not touch it; for it seem'd a part
Of her own self; fresh, full, the most mature
Of blossoms, yet a blossom; with a touch
To fall, and yet unfallen. She drew back
The boon she tender'd, and then, finding not
The ribbon at her waist to fix it in,
Dropp'd it, as loth to drop it, on the rest.

FAREWELL TO ITALY

I LEAVE thee, beauteous Italy! no more
From the high terraces, at even-tide,
To look supine into thy depths of sky,
Thy golden moon between the cliff and me,
Or thy dark spires of fretted cypresses
Bordering the channel of the milky way.
Fiesole and Valdarno must be dreams
Hereafter, and my own lost Affrico
Murmur to me but in the poet's song.
I did believe (what have I not believ'd?),
Weary with age, but unoppress'd by pain,
To close in thy soft clime my quiet day
And rest my bones in the mimosa's shade.
Hope! Hope! few ever cherish'd thee so little;
Few are the heads thou hast so rarely rais'd;
But thou didst promise this, and all was well.
For we are fond of thinking where to lie
When every pulse hath ceas'd, when the lone heart
Can lift no aspiration — reasoning
As if the sight were unimpair'd by death,
Were unobstructed by the coffin-lid,
And the sun cheer'd corruption! Over all
The smiles of Nature shed a potent charm,
And light us to our chamber at the grave.

THE MAID'S LAMENT

ELIZABETHAN

I LOV'D him not; and yet now he is gone
I feel I am alone.
I check'd him while he spoke; yet could he speak,
Alas! I would not check.
For reasons not to love him once I sought,
And wearied all my thought
To vex myself and him: I now would give
My love, could he but live
Who lately liv'd for me, and when he found
'T was vain, in holy ground
He hid his face amid the shades of death.
I waste for him my breath

Who wasted his for me ; but mine returns,
And this lone bosom burns
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart : for years
Wept he as bitter tears.
Merciful God ! such was his latest prayer,
These may she never share !
Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
Than daisies in the mould,
Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
And oh ! pray too for me !

MARGARET

Mother, I cannot mind my wheel ;
My fingers ache, my lips are dry ;
Oh, if you felt the pain I feel !
But oh, who ever felt as I !
No longer could I doubt him true,
All other men may use deceit ;
He always said my eyes were blue,
And often swore my lips were sweet.

ON MUSIC

Many love music but for music's sake ;
Many because her touches can awake
Thoughts that repose within the breast half dead,
And rise to follow where she loves to lead.
What various feelings come from days gone by !
What tears from far-off sources dim the eye !
Few, when light fingers with sweet voices play,
And melodies swell, pause, and melt away,
Mind how at every touch, at every tone,
A spark of life hath glisten'd and hath gone.

PLAYS

Alas, how soon the hours are over
Counted us out to play the lover !
And how much narrower is the stage
Allotted us to play the sage !
But when we play the fool, how wide
The theatre expands ! beside,
How long the audience sits before us !
How many prompters ! what a chorus !

THERE FALLS WITH EVERY WEDDING CHIME

There falls with every wedding chime
A feather from the wing of Time.
You pick it up, and say "How fair
To look upon its colors are !"
Another drops day after day
Unheeded ; not one word you say.
When bright and dusky are blown past,
Upon the hearse there nods the last.

SHAKESPEARE AND MILTON

The tongue of England, that which myriads
Have spoken and will speak, were paralyz'd
Hereafter, but two mighty men stand forth
Above the flight of ages, two alone ;
One crying out,
All nations spoke through me.
The other :
True ; and through this trumpet burst
God's word ; the fall of Angels, and the doom
First of immortal, then of mortal, Man.
Glory ! be glory ! not to me, to God.

MACAULAY

The dreamy rhymer's measur'd snore
Falls heavy on our ears no more ;
And by long strides are left behind
The dear delights of woman-kind,
Who win their battles like their loves,
In satin waistcoats and kid gloves,
And have achiev'd the crowning work
When they have truss'd and skewer'd a Turk.
Another comes with stouter tread,
And stalks among the statelier dead.
He rushes on, and hails by turns
High-crested Scott, broad-breasted Burns,
And shows the British youth, who ne'er
Will lag behind, what Romans were,
When all the Tuscans and their Lars
Shouted, and shook the towers of Mars.

ROBERT BROWNING

THERE is delight in singing, though none hear
Beside the singer ; and there is delight
In praising, though the praiser sit alone
And see the prais'd far off him, far above.
Shakspeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech ! and brief for thee,
Browning ! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walk'd along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing : the breeze
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

ON THE DEATH OF M. D'OSSOLI AND HIS WIFE MARGARET FULLER

OVER his millions Death has lawful power,
But over thee, brave D'Ossoli ! none, none.
After a longer struggle, in a fight
Worthy of Italy, to youth restor'd,
Thou, far from home, art sunk beneath the surge
Of the Atlantic ; on its shore ; in reach
Of help ; in trust of refuge ; sunk with all
Precious on earth to thee . . . a child, a wife !
Proud as thou wert of her, America
Is prouder, showing to her sons how high
Swells woman's courage in a virtuous breast.
She would not leave behind her those she lov'd :
Such solitary safety might become
Others ; not her ; not her who stood beside
The pallet of the wounded, when the worst
Of France and Perfidy assail'd the walls
Of unsuspicious Rome. Rest, glorious soul,
Renown'd for strength of genius, Margaret !
Rest with the twain too dear ! My words are few,
And shortly none will hear my failing voice,
But the same language with more full appeal
Shall hail thee. Many are the sons of song
Whom thou hast heard upon thy native plains
Worthy to sing of thee : the hour is come ;
Take we our seats and let the dirge begin.

TO IANTHE

YOU smil'd, you spoke, and I believ'd,
By every word and smile deceiv'd.
Another man would hope no more ;
Nor hope I what I hop'd before :
But let not this last wish be vain ;
Deceive, deceive me once again !

IANTHE'S TROUBLES

YOUR pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,
Cut down and up again as blithe as ever ;
From you, Ianthe, little troubles pass
Like little ripples in a sunny river.

THE APPEAL

REMAIN, ah not in youth alone,
Though youth, where you are, long will stay,
But when my summer days are gone,
And my autumnal haste away.
" Can I be always by your side ? "
No ; but the hours you can, you must,
Nor rise at Death's approaching stride,
Nor go when dust is gone to dust.

THE TEST

I HELD her hand, the pledge of bliss,
Her hand that trembled and withdrew ;
She bent her head before my kiss . . .
My heart was sure that hers was true.
Now I have told her I must part,
She shakes my hand, she bids adieu,
Nor shuns the kiss. Alas, my heart !
Hers never was the heart for you.

IN AFTER TIME

No, my own love of other years !
No, it must never be.
Much rests with you that yet endears,
Alas ! but what with me ?
Could those bright years o'er me revolve
So gay, o'er you so fair,
The pearl of life we would dissolve
And each the cup might share.
You show that truth can ne'er decay,
Whatever fate befalls ;
I, that the myrtle and the bay
Shoot fresh on ruin'd walls.

A PROPHECY

PROUD word you never spoke, but you will speak
Four not exempt from pride some future day.
Resting on one white hand a warm wet cheek,
Over my open volume you will say,
"This man loved *me!*" then rise and trip away.

COWSLIPS

WITH rosy hand a little girl press'd down
A boss of fresh-cull'd cowslips in a rill :
Often as they sprang up again, a frown
Show'd she dislik'd resistance to her will :
But when they droop'd their heads and shone much less,
She shook them to and fro, and threw them by,
And tripp'd away. "Ye loathe the heaviness
Ye love to cause, my little girls !" thought I,
"And what has shone for you, by you must die !"

WRINKLES

WHEN Helen first saw wrinkles in her face
('T was when some fifty long had settled there
And intermarried and branch'd off awide)
She threw herself upon her couch and wept :
On this side hung her head, and over that
Listlessly she let fall the faithless brass
That made the men as faithless.
But when you
Found them, or fancied them, and would not hear
That they were only vestiges of smiles,
Or the impression of some amorous hair
Astray from cloister'd curls and roseate band,
Which had been lying there all night perhaps
Upon a skin so soft, "No, no," you said,
"Sure, they are coming, yes, are come, are here :
Well, and what matters it, while thou art too !"

ADVICE

To write as your sweet mother does
Is all you wish to do.
Play, sing, and smile for others, Rose !
Let others write for you.

Or mount again your Dartmoor grey,
And I will walk beside,
Until we reach that quiet bay
Which only hears the tide.

Then wave at me your pencil, then
At distance bid me stand,
Before the cavern'd cliff, again
The creature of your hand.

And bid me then go past the nook
To sketch me less in size ;
There are but few content to look
So little in your eyes.

Delight us with the gifts you have,
And wish for none beyond :
To some be gay, to some be grave,
To one (blest youth !) be fond.

Pleasures there are how close to Pain,
And better unpossest !
Let poetry's too throbbing vein
Lie quiet in your breast.

HOW TO READ ME

To turn my volumes o'er nor find
(Sweet unsuspicious friend !)
Some vestige of an erring mind
To chide or discommend,

Believe that all were lov'd like you
With love from blame exempt,
Believe that all my griefs were true
And all my joys but dreamt.

TIME TO BE WISE

Yes ; I write verses now and then,
But blunt and flaccid is my pen,
No longer talk'd of by young men
As rather clever ;
In the last quarter are my eyes,
You see it by their form and size ;
Is it not time then to be wise ?
Or now or never.

Fairest that ever sprang from Eve !
While Time allows the short reprieve,
Just look at me ! would you believe
'T was once a lover ?
I cannot clear the five-bar gate ;
But, trying first its timber's state,
Climb stiffly up, take breath, and wait
To trundle over.

Through gallopade I cannot swing
The entangling blooms of Beauty's spring :
I cannot say the tender thing,
Be 't true or false,
And am beginning to opine
Those girls are only half divine
Whose waists yon wicked boys entwine
In giddy waltz.

I fear that arm above that shoulder ;
I wish them wiser, graver, older,
Sedater, and no harm if colder,
And panting less.
Ah ! people were not half so wild
In former days, when, starchly mild,
Upon her high-heel'd Essex smil'd
The brave Queen Bess.

THE ONE WHITE HAIR

The wisest of the wise
Listen to pretty lies
And love to hear them told ;
Doubt not that Solomon
Listen'd to many a one, —
Some in his youth, and more when he grew old.

I never was among
The choir of Wisdom's song,
But pretty lies lov'd I
As much as any king,
When youth was on the wing,
And (must it then be told ?) when youth had quite gone by.

Alas ! and I have not
The pleasant hour forgot
When one pert lady said,
" O Walter ! I am quite
Bewilder'd with affright !
I see (sit quiet now) a white hair on your head ! "

Another more benign
Snipp'd it away from mine,
And in her own dark hair
Pretended it was found . . .
She leap'd, and twirl'd it round . . .
Fair as she was, she never was so fair !

ON HIMSELF

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife ;
Nature I lov'd, and next to Nature, Art ;
I warm'd both hands before the fire of life ;
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.

ON LUCRETIA BORGIA'S HAIR

Borgia, thou once wert almost too august
And high for adoration ; now thou 'rt dust ;
All that remains of thee these plaits unfold,
Calm hair meandering in pellucid gold.

PERSISTENCE

My hopes retire ; my wishes as before
Struggle to find their resting-place in vain :
The ebbing sea thus beats against the shore ;
The shore repels it ; it returns again.

MAN

In his own image the Creator made,
His own pure sunbeam quicken'd thee, O man!
Thou breathing dial! since thy day began
The present hour was ever mark'd with shade!

TO SLEEP

Come, Sleep! but mind ye! if you come without
The little girl that struck me at the rout,
By Jove! I would not give you half-a-crown
For all your poppy-heads and all your down.

ON LIVING TOO LONG

Is it not better at an early hour
In its calm cell to rest the weary head,
While birds are singing and while blooms the bower,
Than sit the fire out and go starv'd to bed?

A THOUGHT

Blythe bell, that calls to bridal halls,
Tolls deep a darker day;
The very shower that feeds the flower
Weeps also its decay.

HEARTSEASE

There is a flower I wish to wear,
But not until first worn by you—
Heartsease—of all earth's flowers most rare;
Bring it; and bring enough for two.

VERSES WHY BURNT

How many verses have I thrown
Into the fire because the one
Peculiar word, the wanted most,
Was irrecoverably lost!

DEATH UNDREADED

Death stands above me, whispering low
I know not what into my ear:
Of his strange language all I know
Is, there is not a word of fear.

MEMORY

The Mother of the Muses, we are taught,
Is Memory: she has left me; they remain,
And shake my shoulder, urging me to sing
About the summer days, my loves of old.
Alas! alas! is all I can reply.
Memory has left with me that name alone,
Harmonious name, which other bards may sing,
But her bright image in my darkest hour
Comes back, in vain comes back, call'd or uncall'd.
Forgotten are the names of visitors
Ready to press my hand but yesterday;
Forgotten are the names of earlier friends
Whose genial converse and glad countenance
Are fresh as ever to mine ear and eye;
To these, when I have written and besought
Remembrance of me, the word *Dear* alone
Hangs on the upper verge, and waits in vain.
A blessing wert thou, O oblivion,
If thy stream carried only weeds away,
But vernal and autumnal flowers alike
It hurries down to wither on the strand.

FOR AN EPITAPH AT FIESOLE

Lo! where the four mimosas blend their shade
In calm repose at last is Landor laid;
For ere he slept he saw them planted here
By her his soul had ever held most dear,
And he had liv'd enough when he had dried her tear.

George Darley

THE FLOWER OF BEAUTY

SWEET in her green dell the flower of beauty slumbers,
Lull'd by the faint breezes sighing through her hair ;
Sleeps she, and hears not the melancholy numbers
Breath'd to my sad lute amid the lonely air.

Down from the high cliffs the rivulet is teeming,
To wind round the willow-banks that lure him from above ;
O that, in tears from my rocky prison streaming,
I, too, could glide to the bower of my love !

Ah, where the woodbines with sleepy arms have wound her,
Opes she her eyelids at the dream of my lay,
Listening, like the dove, while the fountains echo round her,
To her lost mate's call in the forests far away.

Come, then, my bird ! for the peace thou ever bearest,
Still Heaven's messenger of comfort to me ;
Come ! this fond bosom, my faithfullest, my fairest,
Bleeds with its death-wound — but deeper yet for thee.

SUMMER WINDS

UP the dale and down the bourne,
O'er the meadow swift we fly ;
Now we sing, and now we mourn,
Now we whistle, now we sigh.

By the grassy-fringed river
Through the murmuring reeds we sweep,
Mid the lily-leaves we quiver,
To their very hearts we creep.

Now the maiden rose is blushing
At the frolic things we say,
While aside her cheek we 're rushing,
Like some truant bees at play.

Through the blooming groves we rustle,
Kissing every bud we pass, —
As we did it in the bustle,
Scarcely knowing how it was.

Down the glen, across the mountain,
O'er the yellow heath we roam,
Whirling round about the fountain
Till its little breakers foam.

Bending down the weeping willows,
While our vesper hymn we sigh ;
Then unto our rosy pillows
On our weary wings we hie.

There of idlenesses dreaming,
Scarce from waking we refrain,
Moments long as ages deeming
Till we 're at our play again.

SONGS FROM "SYLVIA; OR, THE MAY QUEEN"

I

CHORUS OF SPIRITS

GENTLY ! — gently ! — down ! — down !
From the starry courts on high,
Gently step adown, down
The ladder of the sky.

Sunbeam steps are strong enough
For such airy feet :
Spirits, blow your trumpets rough,
So as they be sweet !

Breathe them loud, the Queen descending,
Yet a lowly welcome breathe,
Like so many flowerets bending
Zephyr's breezy foot beneath.

II

MORNING-SONG

AWAKE thee, my Lady-love !
Wake thee, and rise !
The sun through the bower peeps
Into thine eyes !

Behold how the early lark
  Springs from the corn!
Hark, hark how the flower-bird
  Winds her wee horn!

The swallow's glad shriek is heard
  All through the air;
The stock-dove is murmuring
  Loud as she dare.

Apollo's wing'd bugleman
  Cannot contain,
But peals his loud trumpet-call
  Once and again.

Then wake thee, my Lady-love!
  Bird of my bower!
The sweetest and sleepiest
  Bird at this hour!

III

NEPHON'S SONG

LADY and gentlemen fays, come buy!
No pedlar has such a rich packet as I.

Who wants a gown
  Of purple fold,
Embroider'd down
  The seams with gold?
    See here! — a Tulip richly laced
    To please a royal fairy's taste!

Who wants a cap
  Of crimson grand?
By great good hap
  I've one on hand:
    Look, sir! — a Cock's-comb, flowering red,
    'T is just the thing, sir, for your head!

Who wants a frock
  Of vestal hue?
Or snowy smock? —
  Fair maid, do you?
    O me! — a Ladysmock so white!
    Your bosom's self is not more bright.

Who wants to sport
  A slender limb?
I've every sort
  Of hose for him:
    Both scarlet, striped, and yellow ones:
    This Woodbine makes such pantaloons!

Who wants — (hush! hush!)
  A box of paint?
'T will give a blush
  Yet leave no taint:
    This rose with natural rouge is fill'd,
    From its own dewy leaves distill'd.

Then lady and gentlemen fays, come buy!
You never will meet such a merchant as I!

IV

ROMANZO TO SYLVIA

I'VE taught thee Love's sweet lesson o'er,
A task that is not learn'd with tears:
  Was Sylvia e'er so blest before
In her wild, solitary years?
    Then what does he deserve, the Youth,
    Who made her con so dear a truth!

Till now in silent vales to roam,
Singing vain songs to heedless flowers,
  Or watch the dashing billows foam,
Amid thy lonely myrtle bowers,
    To weave light crowns of various hue, —
    Were all the joys thy bosom knew.

The wild bird, though most musical,
Could not to thy sweet plaint reply;
  The streamlet and the waterfall
Could only weep when thou didst sigh!
    Thou couldst not change one dulcet word
    Either with billow, or with bird.

For leaves and flowers, but these alone,
Winds have a soft discoursing way;
  Heav'n's starry talk is all its own, —
It dies in thunder far away.
    E'en when thou wouldst the Moon beguile
    To speak, — she only deigns to smile!

Now, birds and winds, be churlish still,
Ye waters keep your sullen roar,
  Stars be as distant as ye will, —
Sylvia need court ye now no more:
    In Love there is society
    She never yet could find with ye!

Bryan Waller Procter

("BARRY CORNWALL")

THE SEA

THE sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions round;
It plays with the clouds; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the sea! I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be;
With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence wheresoe'er I go;
If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter? *I* shall ride and sleep.

I love, O, how I love to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the sou'west blasts do blow.

I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I lov'd the great sea more and more,
And backwards flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest;
And a mother she was, and is, to me;
For I was born on the open sea!

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise roll'd,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcom'd to life the ocean-child!

I've liv'd since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers, a sailor's life,
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
But never have sought nor sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he comes to me,
Shall come on the wild, unbounded sea!

THE HUNTER'S SONG

RISE! Sleep no more! 'T is a noble morn:
The dews hang thick on the fringed thorn,
And the frost shrinks back, like a beaten hound,
Under the steaming, steaming ground.
Behold, where the billowy clouds flow by,
And leave us alone in the clear gray sky!
Our horses are ready and steady. — So, ho!
I'm gone, like a dart from the Tartar's bow.

Hark, hark! — Who calleth the maiden Morn
From her sleep in the woods and the stubble corn?
The horn, — the horn!
The merry, sweet ring of the hunter's horn.

Now, thorough the copse, where the fox is found,
And over the stream, at a mighty bound,
And over the high lands, and over the low,
O'er furrows, o'er meadows, the hunters go!
Away! — as a hawk flies full at its prey,
So flieth the hunter, away, — away!
From the burst at the cover till set of sun,
When the red fox dies, and — the day is done!

Hark, hark! — What sound on the wind is borne?
'T is the conquering voice of the hunter's horn.
The horn, — the horn!
The merry, bold voice of the hunter's horn.

Sound! Sound the horn! To the hunter good
What's the gulley deep or the roaring flood?
Right over he bounds, as the wild stag bounds,
At the heels of his swift, sure, silent hounds.
O, what delight can a mortal lack,
When he once is firm on his horse's back,
With his stirrups short, and his snaffle strong,
And the blast of the horn for his morning song?

Hark, hark! — Now, home! and dream till morn
Of the bold, sweet sound of the hunter's horn!
The horn, — the horn!
O, the sound of all sounds is the hunter's horn!

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE

How many summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?
Time, like the winged wind
When 't bends the flowers,
Hath left no mark behind,
To count the hours.

Some weight of thought, though loth,
On thee he leaves;
Some lines of care round both
Perhaps he weaves;
Some fears, — a soft regret
For joys scarce known;
Sweet looks we half forget; —
All else is flown!

Ah! — With what thankless heart
I mourn and sing!
Look, where our children start,
Like sudden Spring!
With tongues all sweet and low,
Like a pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and Time!

THE STORMY PETREL

A THOUSAND miles from land are we,
Tossing about on the roaring sea;
From billow to bounding billow cast,
Like fleecy snow on the stormy blast:
The sails are scatter'd abroad, like weeds,
The strong masts shake like quivering reeds,
The mighty cables, and iron chains,
The hull, which all earthly strength disdains,
They strain and they crack, and hearts like stone
Their natural hard, proud strength disown.

Up and down! Up and down!
From the base of the wave to the billow's crown,
And midst the flashing and feathery foam
The Stormy Petrel finds a home, —
A home, if such a place may be,
For her who lives on the wide, wide sea,
On the craggy ice, in the frozen air,
And only seeketh her rocky lair
To warm her young, and to teach them spring
At once o'er the waves on their stormy wing.

O'er the Deep! O'er the Deep!
Where the whale, and the shark, and the sword-fish sleep,
Outflying the blast and the driving rain,
The Petrel telleth her tale — in vain;
For the mariner curseth the warning bird
Who bringeth him news of the storms unheard!
Ah! thus does the prophet, of good or ill,
Meet hate from the creatures he serveth still:
Yet he ne'er falters: — So, Petrel! spring
Once more o'er the waves on thy stormy wing!

PEACE! WHAT DO TEARS AVAIL?

PEACE! what do tears avail?
She lies all dumb and pale,
And from her eye
The spirit of lovely life is fading,
And she must die!
Why looks the lover wroth? the friend upbraiding?
Reply, reply!

Hath she not dwelt too long
'Midst pain, and grief, and wrong?
Then, why not die?
Why suffer again her doom of sorrow,
And hopeless lie?
Why nurse the trembling dream until tomorrow?
Reply, reply!

Death! Take her to thine arms,
In all her stainless charms,
And with her fly
To heavenly haunts, where, clad in brightness,
The Angels lie.
Wilt bear her there, O Death! in all her whiteness?
Reply, reply!

LIFE

WE are born; we laugh; we weep;
We love; we droop; we die!

Ah ! wherefore do we laugh or weep ?
  Why do we live, or die ?
Who knows that secret deep ?
  Alas, not I !

Why doth the violet spring
  Unseen by human eye ?
Why do the radiant seasons bring
  Sweet thoughts that quickly fly ?
Why do our fond hearts cling
  To things that die ?

We toil, — through pain and wrong ;
  We fight, — and fly ;
We love ; we lose ; and then, ere long,
  Stone-dead we lie.
O life ! is *all* thy song
  "Endure and — die" ?

THE BLOOD HORSE

Gamarra is a dainty steed,
Strong, black, and of a noble breed,
Full of fire, and full of bone,
With all his line of fathers known ;
Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
But blown abroad by the pride within !
His mane is like a river flowing,
And his eyes like embers glowing
In the darkness of the night,
And his pace as swift as light.

Look, — how 'round his straining throat
Grace and shifting beauty float !
Sinewy strength is on his reins,
And the red blood gallops through his veins ;
Richer, redder, never ran
Through the boasting heart of man.
He can trace his lineage higher
Than the Bourbon dare aspire, —
Douglas, Guzman, or the Guelph,
Or O'Brien's blood itself !

He, who hath no peer, was born
Here, upon a red March morn :
But his famous fathers dead
Were Arabs all, and Arab bred,
And the last of that great line
Trod like one of a race divine !
And yet, — he was but friend to one
Who fed him at the set of sun,
By some lone fountain fringed with green :
With him, a roving Bedouin,
He liv'd, — (none else would he obey
Through all the hot Arabian day,) —
And died untam'd upon the sands
Where Balkh amidst the desert stands !

SIT DOWN, SAD SOUL

Sit down, sad soul, and count
  The moments flying :
Come, — tell the sweet amount
  That 's lost by sighing !
How many smiles ? — a score ?
Then laugh, and count no more ;
    For day is dying.

Lie down, sad soul, and sleep,
  And no more measure
The flight of Time, nor weep
  The loss of leisure ;
But here, by this lone stream,
Lie down with us, and dream
    Of starry treasure.

We dream : do thou the same :
  We love — for ever ;
We laugh ; yet few we shame,
  The gentle, never.
Stay, then, till Sorrow dies ;
Then — hope and happy skies
    Are thine for ever !

GOLDEN-TRESSED ADELAIDE

Sing, I pray, a little song,
  Mother dear !
Neither sad nor very long :
It is for a little maid,
Golden-tressed Adelaide !
Therefore let it suit a merry, merry ear,
  Mother dear !

Let it be a merry strain,
  Mother dear !
Shunning e'en the thought of pain :
For our gentle child will weep,
If the theme be dark and deep ;
And we will not draw a single, single tear,
  Mother dear !

Childhood should be all divine,
  Mother dear !
And like an endless summer shine ;
Gay as Edward's shouts and cries,
Bright as Agnes' azure eyes :
Therefore, bid thy song be merry : — dost
    thou hear,
  Mother dear ?

A POET'S THOUGHT

TELL me, what is a poet's thought?
  Is it on the sudden born?
Is it from the starlight caught?
Is it by the tempest taught,
  Or by whispering morn?

Was it cradled in the brain?
  Chain'd awhile, or nurs'd in night?
Was it wrought with toil and pain?
Did it bloom and fade again,
  Ere it burst to light?

No more question of its birth:
  Rather love its better part!
'T is a thing of sky and earth,
Gathering all its golden worth
  From the Poet's heart.

A PETITION TO TIME

TOUCH us gently, Time!
  Let us glide adown thy stream
Gently, — as we sometimes glide
  Through a quiet dream.
Humble voyagers are We,
Husband, wife, and children three —
(One is lost, — an angel, fled
To the azure overhead.)

Touch us gently, Time!
  We 've not proud nor soaring wings:
Our ambition, our content,
  Lies in simple things.
Humble voyagers are We,
O'er Life's dim, unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime; —
Touch us gently, gentle Time!

Charles Jeremiah Wells

FROM "JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN"

RACHEL

RACHEL, the beautiful (as she was call'd),
Despis'd our mother Leah, for that she
Was tender-ey'd, lean-favor'd, and did lack
The pulpy ripeness swelling the white skin
To sleek proportions beautiful and round,
With wrinkled joints so fruitful to the eye.
All this is fair: and yet we know it true
That 'neath a pomane breast and snowy side
A heart of guile and falsehood may be hid,
As well as where the soil is deeper tinct.
So here with this same Rachel was it found:
The dim blue-laced veins on either brow,
Neath the transparent skin meandering,
That with the silver-leaved lily vied;
Her full dark eye, whose brightness glisten'd through
The sable lashes soft as camel-hair;
Her slanting head curv'd like the maiden moon
And hung with hair luxuriant as a vine
And blacker than a storm; her rounded ear
Turn'd like a shell upon some golden shore;
Her whispering foot that carried all her weight,
Nor left its little pressure on the sand;
Her lips as drowsy poppies, soft and red,
Gathering a dew from her escaping breath;
Her voice melodious, mellow, deep, and clear,
Lingering like sweet music in the ear;
Her neck o'ersoften'd like to unsunn'd curd;
Her tapering fingers rounded to a point;
The silken softness of her veined hand;
Her dimpled knuckles answering to her chin;
And teeth like honeycombs o' the wilderness:
All these did tend to a bad proof in her.
For armed thus in beauty she did steal
The eye of Jacob to her proper self,
Engross'd his time, and kept him by her side,
Casting on Leah indifference and neglect;
Whereat great Heaven took our mother's part
And struck young Rachel with a barrenness,
While she bore children: thus the matter went;
Till Rachel, feeling guilty of her fault,
Turn'd to some penitence, which Heaven heard;
And then she bore this Joseph, who must, and does,

Inherit towards the children all the pride
And scorn his mother had towards our mother :
Wherefore he suffers in our just rebuke.

PHRAXANOR TO JOSEPH

Phrax. Oh ! ignorant boy, it is the secret hour,
The sun of love doth shine most goodly fair.
Contemptible darkness never yet did dull
The splendor of love's palpitating light.
At love's slight curtains, that are made of sighs,
Though e'er so dark, silence is seen to stand
Like to a flower closed in the night ;
Or, like a lovely image drooping down
With its fair head aslant and finger rais'd,
And mutely on its shoulder slumbering.
Pulses do sound quick music in Love's ear,
And blended fragrance in his startled breath
Doth hang the hair with drops of magic dew.
All outward thoughts, all common circumstance,
Are buried in the dimple of his smile :
And the great city like a vision sails
From out the closing doors of the hush'd mind.
His heart strikes audibly against his ribs
As a dove's wing doth freak upon a cage,
Forcing the blood athro' the cramped veins
Faster than dolphins do o'ershoot the tide
Cours'd by the yawning shark. Therefore I say
Night-blooming Cereus, and the star-flower sweet,
The honeysuckle, and the eglantine,
And the ring'd vinous tree that yields red wine,
Together with all intertwining flowers,
Are plants most fit to ramble o'er each other,
And form the bower of all-precious Love,
Shrouding the sun with fragrant bloom and leaves
From jealous interception of Love's gaze.
This is Love's cabin in the light of day,
But oh ! compare it not with the black night;
Delay thou sun, and give me instant night —
Its soft, mysterious, and secret hours ;
The whitest clouds are pillows to bright stars,
Ah ! therefore shroud thine eyes.

THE PATRIARCHAL HOME

Joseph. Still I am patient, tho' you're merciless.
Yet to speak out my mind, I do avouch
There is no city feast, nor city show,
The encampment of the king and soldiery,
Rejoicings, revelries, and victories,
Can equal the remembrance of my home
In visible imagination.
Even as he was I see my father now,
His grave and graceful head's benignity
Musing beyond the confines of this world,
His world within with all its mysteries.
What pompless majesty was in his mien,
An image of integrity creates,
Pattern of nature, in perfection.
Lo ! in the morning when we issued forth,
The patriarch surrounded by his sons,
Girt round with looks of sweet obedience,
Each struggling who should honor him the most ;
While from the wrinkles deep of many years,
Enfurrow'd smiles, like violets in snow,
Touch'd us with heat and melancholy cold,
Mingling our joy with sorrow for his age :
There were my brothers, habited in skins ;
Ten goodly men, myself, and a sweet youth
Too young to mix in anything but joy ;
And in his hands each led a milk-white steer,
Hung o'er with roses, garlanded with flowers,
Laden with fragrant panniers of green boughs
Of bays and myrtle interleav'd with herbs,
Wherein was stor'd our country wine and fruit,
And bread with honey sweeten'd, and dried figs,
And pressed curds, and choicest rarities,
Stores of the cheerless season of the year ;
While at our sides the women of our tribe,
With pitchers on their heads, fill'd to the brim
With wine, and honey, and with smoking milk,
Made proud the black-ey'd heifers with the swell
Of the sweet anthem sung in plenty's praise.
Thus would we journey to the wilderness,
And fixing on some peak that did o'erlook
The spacious plains that lay display'd beneath,

Where we could see our cattle, like to specks
In the warm meads, browsing the juicy grass,
There pitch our tent, and feast, and revel out, —
The minutes flying faster than our feet
That vaulted nimbly to the pipe and voice,
Making fatigue more sweet by appetite.
There stood the graceful Reuben by my sire,
Piping a ditty, ardent as the sun,
And, like him, stealing renovation
Into the darkest corner of the soul,
And filling it with light. There, women group'd,
My sisters and their maids, with ears subdued,
With bosoms panting from the eager dance,
Against each other lean'd ; as I have seen
A graceful tuft of lilies of the vale
Oppress'd with rain, upon each other bend,
While freshness has stol'n o'er them. Some way off
My brothers pitch'd the bar, or plough'd for fame,
Each two with their two heifers harness'd fast
Unto the shaft, and labor'd till the sweat
Had crept about them like a sudden thaw.
Anon they tied an eagle to a tree,
And strove at archery ; or with a bear
Struggled for strength of limb. These were no slaves —
No villain's sons to rifle passengers.
The sports being done, the winners claim'd the spoil :
Or hide, or feather, or renowned bow,
Or spotted cow, or fleet and pamper'd horse.
And then my father bless'd us, and we sang
Our sweet way home again. Oft I have ach'd
In memory of these so precious hours,
And wept upon those keys that were my pride,
And soak'd my pillow thro' the heavy night.
Alas ! God willing, I 'll be patient yet.

THE TRIUMPH OF JOSEPH

In the royal path
Came maidens rob'd in white, enchain'd in flowers,
Sweeping the ground with incense-scented palms :
Then came the sweetest voices of the land,
And cried, 'Bow ye the knee !' — and then aloud
Clarions and trumpets broke forth in the air:
After a multitude of men-at-arms,
Of priests, of officers, and horsed chiefs,
Came the benignant Pharaoh, whose great pride
Was buried in his smile. I did but glimpse
His car, for 't was of burnish'd gold. No eye
Save that of eagles could confront the blaze
That seem'd to burn the air, unless it fell
Either on sapphire or carbuncle huge
That riveted the weight. This car was drawn
By twelve jet horses, being four abreast,
And pied in their own foam. Within the car
Sat Pharaoh, whose bare head was girt around
By a crown of iron ; and his sable hair,
Like strakey as a mane, fell where it would,
And somewhat hid his glossy sun-brent neck
And carcanet of precious sardonyx.
His jewell'd armlets, weighty as a sword,
Clasp'd his brown naked arms — a crimson robe,
Deep edged with silver, and with golden thread,
Upon a bear-skin kirtle deeply blush'd,
Whose broad resplendent braid and shield-like clasps
Were boss'd with diamonds large, by rubies fir'd,
Like beauty's eye in rage, or roses white
Lit by the glowing red. Beside him lay
A bunch of poppied corn ; and at his feet
A tamed lion as his footstool crouch'd.
Cas'd o'er in burnish'd plates I, hors'd, did bear
A snow-white eagle on a silver shaft,
From whence great Pharaoh's royal banner stream'd,
An emblem of his might and dignity ;
And as the minstrelsy burst clanging forth,
With shouts that broke like thunder from the host,
The royal bird with kindred pride of power
Flew up the measure of his silken cord,
And arch'd his cloud-like wings as he would mount,
And babble of this glory to the sun.
Then follow'd Joseph in a silver car,
Drawn by eight horses, white as evening clouds :

His feet were resting upon Pharaoh's sword;
And on his head a crown of drooping corn
Mock'd that of Ceres in high holiday.
His robes were simple, but were full of grace,
And (out of love and truth I speak him thus)
I never did behold a man less proud,
More dignified or grateful to admire.
His honors nothing teas'd him from himself;
And he but fill'd his fortunes like a man
Who did intend to honor them as much
As they could honor him.

Sir Henry Taylor

FROM "PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE"

JOHN OF LAUNOY

I NEVER look'd that he should live so long.
He was a man of that unsleeping spirit,
He seem'd to live by miracle: his food
Was glory, which was poison to his mind
And peril to his body. He was one
Of many thousand such that die betimes,
Whose story is a fragment, known to few.
Then comes the man who has the luck to live,
And he 's a prodigy. Compute the chances,
And deem there 's ne'er a one in dangerous times
Who wins the race of glory, but than him
A thousand men more gloriously endow'd
Have fallen upon the course; a thousand others
Have had their fortunes founder'd by a chance,
Whilst lighter barks push'd past them; to whom add
A smaller tally, of the singular few
Who, gifted with predominating powers,
Bear yet a temperate will and keep the peace.
The world knows nothing of its greatest men.

REVOLUTIONS

There was a time, so ancient records tell,
There were communities, scarce known by name
In these degenerate days, but once far-fam'd,
Where liberty and justice, hand in hand,
Order'd the common weal; where great men grew
Up to their natural eminence, and none,
Saving the wise, just, eloquent, were great;
Where power was of God's gift, to whom he gave
Supremacy of merit, the sole means
And broad highway to power, that ever then
Was meritoriously administer'd,
Whilst all its instruments from first to last,
The tools of state for service high or low,
Were chosen for their aptness to those ends
Which virtue meditates. To shake the ground
Deep-founded whereupon this structure stood,
Was verily a crime; a treason it was,
Conspiracies to hatch against this state
And its free innocence. But now, I ask,
Where is there on God's earth that polity
Which it is not, by consequence converse,
A treason against nature to uphold?
Whom may we now call free? whom great? whom wise?
Whom innocent? the free are only they
Whom power makes free to execute all ills
Their hearts imagine; they alone are great
Whose passions nurse them from their cradles up
In luxury and lewdness, — whom to see
Is to despise, whose aspects put to scorn
Their station's eminence; the wise, they only
Who wait obscurely till the bolts of heaven
Shall break upon the land, and give them light
Whereby to walk; the innocent, — alas!
Poor innocency lies where four roads meet,
A stone upon her head, a stake driven through her,
For who is innocent that cares to live?
The hand of power doth press the very life
Of innocency out! What then remains

But in the cause of nature to stand forth,
And turn this frame of things the right side up?
For this the hour is come, the sword is drawn,
And tell your masters vainly they resist.

SONG

Down lay in a nook my lady's brach,
And said — my feet are sore,
I cannot follow with the pack
A hunting of the boar.

And though the horn sounds never so clear
With the hounds in loud uproar,
Yet I must stop and lie down here,
Because my feet are sore.

The huntsman when he heard the same,
What answer did he give?
The dog that 's lame is much to blame,
He is not fit to live.

SONG

Quoth tongue of neither maid nor wife
To heart of neither wife nor maid,
Lead we not here a jolly life
Betwixt the shine and shade?

Quoth heart of neither maid nor wife
To tongue of neither wife nor maid,
Thou wag'st, but I am worn with strife,
And feel like flowers that fade.

PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE

Dire rebel though he was,
Yet with a noble nature and great gifts
Was he endow'd, — courage, discretion, wit,
An equal temper, and an ample soul,
Rock-bound and fortified against assaults
Of transitory passion, but below
Built on a surging subterranean fire
That stirr'd and lifted him to high attempts.
So prompt and capable, and yet so calm,
He nothing lack'd in sovereignty but the right,
Nothing in soldiership except good fortune.
Wherefore with honor lay him in his grave,
And thereby shall increase of honor come
Unto their arms who vanquish'd one so wise,
So valiant, so renown'd.

FROM "EDWIN THE FAIR"

THE WIND IN THE PINES

The tale was this:
The wind, when first he rose and went abroad
Through the waste region, felt himself at fault,
Wanting a voice; and suddenly to earth
Descended with a wafture and a swoop,
Where, wandering volatile from kind to kind,
He woo'd the several trees to give him one.
First he besought the ash; the voice she lent
Fitfully with a free and lashing change
Flung here and there its sad uncertainties:
The aspen next; a flutter'd frivolous twitter
Was her sole tribute: from the willow came,
So long as dainty summer dress'd her out,
A whispering sweetness, but her winter note
Was hissing, dry, and reedy: lastly the pine
Did he solicit, and from her he drew
A voice so constant, soft, and lowly deep,
That there he rested, welcoming in her
A mild memorial of the ocean-cave
Where he was born.

A CHARACTERIZATION

His life was private; safely led, aloof
From the loud world, — which yet he understood
Largely and wisely, as no worldling could.
For he, by privilege of his nature proof
Against false glitter, from beneath the roof
Of privacy, as from a cave, survey'd
With steadfast eye its flickering light and shade,
And gently judged for evil and for good.
But whilst he mix'd not for his own behoof
In public strife, his spirit glow'd with zeal,
Not shorn of action, for the public weal, —
For truth and justice as its warp and woof,
For freedom as its signature and seal.
His life, thus sacred from the world, discharged
From vain ambition and inordinate care,
In virtue exercis'd, by reverence rare
Lifted, and by humility enlarged,
Became a temple and a place of prayer.
In latter years he walk'd not singly there;

For one was with him, ready at all hours
His griefs, his joys, his inmost thoughts to share,
Who buoyantly his burthens help'd to bear,
And deck'd his altars daily with fresh flowers.

Lines on the Hon. Edward Ernest Villiers.

ARETINA'S SONG

I 'M a bird that 's free
Of the land and sea,
I wander whither I will ;
But oft on the wing,
I falter and sing,
Oh, fluttering heart, be still,
Be still,
Oh, fluttering heart, be still !

I 'm wild as the wind,
But soft and kind,
And wander whither I may ;
The eyebright sighs,
And says with its eyes,
Thou wandering wind, oh stay,
Oh stay,
Thou wandering wind, oh stay !

A Sicilian Summer.

THE HERO

WHAT makes a hero ? — not success, not fame,
Inebriate merchants, and the loud acclaim
Of glutted Avarice, — caps toss'd up in air,
Or pen of journalist with flourish fair ;
Bells peal'd, stars, ribbons, and a titular name —
These, though his rightful tribute, he can spare ;
His rightful tribute, not his end or aim,
Or true reward ; for never yet did these
Refresh the soul, or set the heart at ease.
What makes a hero ? — An heroic mind,
Express'd in action, in endurance prov'd.
And if there be preëminence of right,
Deriv'd through pain well suffer'd, to the height
Of rank heroic, 't is to bear unmov'd,
Not toil, not risk, not rage of sea or wind,
Not the brute fury of barbarians blind,
But worse — ingratitude and poisonous darts,
Launch'd by the country he had serv'd and lov'd :
This, with a free, unclouded spirit pure,
This, in the strength of silence to endure,
A dignity to noble deeds imparts
Beyond the gauds and trappings of renown ;
This is the hero's complement and crown ;
This miss'd, one struggle had been wanting still,
One glorious triumph of the heroic will,
One self-approval in his heart of hearts.

Lord Macaulay

(THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY)

THE BATTLE OF NASEBY

BY OBADIAH - BIND - THEIR - KINGS - IN - CHAINS-AND-THEIR-NOBLES-WITH-LINKS-OF-IRON, SERGEANT IN IRETON'S REGIMENT

OH ! wherefore come ye forth in triumph from the north,
With your hands, and your feet, and your raiment all red ?
And wherefore doth your rout send forth a joyous shout ?
And whence be the grapes of the wine-press that ye tread ?

Oh ! evil was the root, and bitter was the fruit,
And crimson was the juice of the vintage that we trod ;
For we trampled on the throng of the haughty and the strong,
Who sate in the high places and slew the saints of God.

It was about the noon of a glorious day of June,
That we saw their banners dance and their cuirasses shine,
And the man of blood was there, with his long essenced hair,
And Astley, and Sir Marmaduke, and Rupert of the Rhine.

Like a servant of the Lord, with his bible and his sword,
The general rode along us to form us for the fight;
When a murmuring sound broke out, and swell'd into a shout
Among the godless horsemen upon the tyrant's right.

And hark! like the roar of the billows on the shore,
The cry of battle rises along their charging line:
For God! for the cause! for the Church! for the laws!
For Charles, king of England, and Rupert of the Rhine!

The furious German comes, with his clarions and his drums,
His bravoes of Alsatia and pages of Whitehall;
They are bursting on our flanks! Grasp your pikes! Close your ranks!
For Rupert never comes, but to conquer, or to fall.

They are here — they rush on — we are broken — we are gone —
Our left is borne before them like stubble on the blast.
O Lord, put forth thy might! O Lord, defend the right!
Stand back to back, in God's name! and fight it to the last!

Stout Skippon hath a wound — the centre hath given ground.
Hark! hark! what means the trampling of horsemen on our rear?
Whose banner do I see, boys? 'T is he! thank God! 't is he, boys!
Bear up another minute! Brave Oliver is here!

Their heads all stooping low, their points all in a row:
Like a whirlwind on the trees, like a deluge on the dikes,
Our cuirassiers have burst on the ranks of the Accurst,
And at a shock have scatter'd the forest of his pikes.

Fast, fast, the gallants ride, in some safe nook to hide
Their coward heads, predestin'd to rot on Temple Bar;
And he — he turns! he flies! shame on those cruel eyes
That bore to look on torture, and dare not look on war!

Ho, comrades! scour the plain; and ere ye strip the slain,
First give another stab to make your search secure;
Then shake from sleeves and pockets their broad-pieces and lockets,
The tokens of the wanton, the plunder of the poor.

Fools! your doublets shone with gold, and your hearts were gay and bold,
When you kiss'd your lily hands to your lemans to-day;
And to-morrow shall the fox from her chambers in the rocks
Lead forth her tawny cubs to howl about the prey.

Where be your tongues, that late mock'd at heaven and hell and fate?
And the fingers that once were so busy with your blades?
Your perfum'd satin clothes, your catches and your oaths?
Your stage-plays and your sonnets, your diamonds and your spades?

Down, down, for ever down with the mitre and the crown,
With the Belial of the court, and the Mammon of the Pope!
There is woe in Oxford halls, there is wail in Durham's stalls;
The Jesuit smites his bosom, the bishop rends his cope.

And she of the seven hills shall mourn her children's ills,
And tremble when she thinks on the edge of England's sword;

And the kings of earth in fear shall shudder when they hear
What the hand of God hath wrought for the Houses and the Word!

EPITAPH ON A JACOBITE

To my true king I offer'd free from stain
Courage and faith: vain faith, and courage vain.
For him, I threw lands, honors, wealth, away,
And one dear hope, that was more priz'd than they.
For him I languish'd in a foreign clime,
Gray-hair'd with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pin'd by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fever'd sleep,
Each morning started from the dream to weep;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting place I ask'd, an early grave.
Oh thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I spake like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

IVRY

Now glory to the Lord of hosts, from whom all glories are!
And glory to our sovereign liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, O pleasant land of France!
And thou, Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy;
For cold and stiff and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! hurrah! a single field hath turn'd the chance of war!
Hurrah! hurrah! for Ivry, and Henry of Navarre.

Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand;
And, as we look'd on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own holy name, and Henry of Navarre.

The king is come to marshal us, in all his armor drest;
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He look'd upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He look'd upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smil'd on us, as roll'd from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout: God save our lord the king!
"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well he may,
For never I saw promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine amidst the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the mingled din,
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roaring culverin.
The fiery duke is pricking fast across Saint André's plain,
With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and Almayne.

Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France,
Charge for the golden lilies — upon them with the lance !
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow-white crest ;
And in they burst, and on they rush'd, while, like a guiding star,
Amidst the thickest carnage blaz'd the helmet of Navarre.

Now, God be prais'd, the day is ours : Mayenne hath turn'd his rein ;
D'Aumale hath cried for quarter ; the Flemish count is slain.
Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a Biscay gale ;
The field is heap'd with bleeding steeds, and flags, and cloven mail.
And then we thought on vengeance, and, all along our van,
Remember Saint Bartholomew ! was pass'd from man to man.
But out spake gentle Henry — " No Frenchman is my foe :
Down, down with every foreigner, but let your brethren go : "
Oh ! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or in war,
As our sovereign lord, King Henry, the soldier of Navarre ?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought for France to-day ;
And many a lordly banner God gave them for a prey.
But we of the religion have borne us best in fight ;
And the good lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet white —
Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath ta'en,
The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of false Lorraine.
Up with it high ; unfurl it wide ; — that all the host may know
How God hath humbled the proud house which wrought His Church such woe.
Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their loudest point of war,
Fling the red shreds, a footcloth meet for Henry of Navarre.

Ho ! maidens of Vienna ; ho ! matrons of Lucerne —
Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who never shall return.
Ho ! Philip, send, for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a mass for thy poor spearmen's souls.
Ho ! gallant nobles of the League, look that your arms be bright ;
Ho ! burghers of St. Genevieve, keep watch and ward to-night ;
For our God hath crush'd the tyrant, our God hath rais'd the slave,
And mock'd the counsel of the wise, and the valor of the brave.
Then glory to His holy name, from whom all glories are ;
And glory to our sovereign lord, King Henry of Navarre !

Richard Hengist Horne

FROM "ORION : AN EPIC POEM"

MEETING OF ORION AND ARTEMIS

Afar the hunt in vales below has sped,
But now behind the wooded mount ascends,
Threading its upward mazes of rough boughs,
Moss'd trunks and thickets, still invisible,
Although its jocund music fills the air
With cries and laughing echoes, mellow'd all
By intervening woods and the deep hills.

The scene in front two sloping mountain-sides
Display'd ; in shadow one, and one in light
The loftiest on its summit now sustain'd
The sun-beams, raying like a mighty wheel
Half seen, which left the front-ward surface dark

In its full breadth of shade ; the coming sun
Hidden as yet behind : the other mount,
Slanting oppos'd, swept with an eastward face,
Catching the golden light. Now, while the peal
Of the ascending chase told that the rout
Still midway rent the thickets, suddenly
Along the broad and sunny slope appear'd
The shadow of a stag that fled across,
Follow'd by a Giant's shadow with a spear !

"Hunter of Shadows, thou thyself a Shade,"
Be comforted in this, — that substance holds
No higher attributes ; one sovereign law
Alike develops both, and each shall hunt
Its proper object, each in turn commanding
The primal impulse, till gaunt Time become
A Shadow cast on Space — to fluctuate,
Waiting the breath of the Creative Power
To give new types for substance yet unknown :
So from faint nebulæ bright worlds are born;
So worlds return to vapor. Dreams design
Most solid lasting things, and from the eye
That searches life, death evermore retreats.

Substance unseen, pure mythos, or mirage,
The shadowy chase has vanish'd ; round the swell
Of the near mountain sweeps a bounding stag ;
Round whirls a god-like Giant close behind ;
O'er a fallen trunk the stag with slippery hoofs
Stumbles — his sleek knees lightly touch the grass —
Upward he springs — but in his forward leap,
The Giant's hand hath caught him fast beneath
One shoulder tuft, and, lifted high in air,
Sustains ! Now Phoibos' chariot rising bursts
Over the summits with a circling blaze,
Gilding those frantic antlers, and the head
Of that so glorious Giant in his youth,
Who, as he turns, the form succinct beholds
Of Artemis, — her bow, with points drawn back,
A golden hue on her white rounded breast
Reflecting, while the arrow's ample barb
Gleams o'er her hand, and at his heart is aim'd.

The Giant lower'd his arm — away the stag
Breast forward plunged into a thicket near;
The Goddess paus'd, and dropp'd her arrow's point —
Rais'd it again — and then again relax'd
Her tension, and while slow the shaft came gliding
Over the centre of the bow, beside
Her hand, and gently droop'd, so did the knee
Of that heroic shape do reverence
Before the Goddess. Their clear eyes had ceas'd
To flash, and gaz'd with earnest softening light.

DISTRAUGHT FOR MEROPÉ.

O Meropé !
And where art thou, while idly thus I rave ?
Runs there no hope — no fever through thy veins,
Like that which leaps and courses round my heart ?
Shall I resign thee, passion-perfect maid,
Who in mortality's most finish'd work
Rank'st highest — and lov'st me, even as I love ?
Rather possess thee with a tenfold stress
Of love ungovernable, being denied !
'Gainst fraud what should I cast down in reply ?
What but a sword, since force must do me right,
And strength was given unto me with my birth,
In mine own hand, and by ascendancy
Over my giant brethren. Two remain,
Whom prayers to dark Hephaistos and my sire
Poseidon, shall awaken into life ;
And we will tear up gates, and scatter towers,
Until I bear off Meropé. Sing on !
Sing on, great tempest ! in the darkness sing !
Thy madness is a music that brings calm
Into my central soul ; and from its waves
That now with joy begin to heave and gush,
The burning Image of all life's desire,
Like an absorbing fire-breath'd phantom-god,
Rises and floats ! — here touching on the foam,
There hovering over it ; ascending swift

Starward, then swooping down the hemisphere
Upon the lengthening javelins of the blast.
Why paus'd I in the palace-groves to dream
Of bliss, with all its substance in my reach?
Why not at once, with thee enfolded, whirl
Deep down the abyss of ecstasy, to melt
All brain and being where no reason is,
Or else the source of reason? But the roar
Of Time's great wings, which ne'er had driven me
By dread events, nor broken-down old age,
Back on myself, the close experience
Of false mankind, with whispers cold and dry
As snake-songs midst stone hollows, thus has taught me,
The giant hunter, laugh'd at by the world,
Not to forget the substance in the dream
Which breeds it. Both must melt and merge in one.
Now shall I overcome thee, body and soul,
And like a new-made element brood o'er thee
With all devouring murmurs! Come, my love!
Come, life's blood-tempest! — come, thou blinding storm,
And clasp the rigid pine — this mortal frame
Wrap with thy whirlwinds, rend and wrestle down,
And let my being solve its destiny,
Defying, seeking, thine extremest power;
Famish'd and thirsty for the absorbing doom
Of that immortal death which leads to life,
And gives a glimpse of Heaven's parental scheme.

IN FOREST DEPTHS

Within the isle, far from the walks of men,
Where jocund chase was never heard, nor hoof
Of Satyr broke the moss, nor any bird
Sang, save at times the nightingale — but only
In his prolong'd and swelling tones, nor e'er
With wild joy and hoarse laughing melody,
Closing the ecstasy, as is his wont, —
A forest, separate and far withdrawn
From all the rest, there grew. Old as the earth,
Of cedar was it, lofty in its glooms
When the sun hung o'erhead, and, in its darkness,
Like Night when giving birth to Time's first pulse.
Silence had ever dwelt there; but of late
Came faint sounds, with a cadence droning low,
From the far depths, as of a cataract
Whose echoes midst incumbent foliage died.
From one high mountain gush'd a flowing stream,
Which through the forest pass'd, and found a fall
Within, none knew where, then roll'd tow'rds the sea.

There, underneath the boughs, mark where the gleam
Of sunrise through the roofing's chasm is thrown
Upon a grassy plot below, whereon
The shadow of a stag stoops to the stream
Swift rolling tow'rds the cataract, and drinks deeply.
Throughout the day unceasingly it drinks,
While ever and anon the nightingale,
Not waiting for the evening, swells his hymn —
His one sustain'd and heaven-aspiring tone —
And when the sun hath vanish'd utterly,
Arm over arm the cedars spread their shade,
With arching wrist and long extended hands,
And graveward fingers lengthening in the moon,
Above that shadowy stag whose antlers still
Hang o'er the stream. Now came a richton'd voice
Out of the forest depths, and sang this lay,
With deep speech intervall'd and tender pause.

"If we have lost the world what gain is ours!
Hast thou not built a palace of more grace
Than marble towers? These trunks are pillars rare,
Whose roof embowers with far more grandeur. Say,
Hast thou not found a bliss with Meropé,
As full of rapture as existence new?
'T is thus with me. I know that thou art bless'd.

Our inmost powers, fresh wing'd, shall soar and dream
In realms of Elysian gleam, whose air — light — flowers,
Will ever be, though vague, most fair, most sweet,
Better than memory. — Look yonder, love!
What solemn image through the trunks is straying?
And now he doth not move, yet never turns
On us his visage of rapt vacancy!
It is Oblivion. In his hand — though nought
Knows he of this — a dusky purple flower
Droops over its tall stem. Again, ah see!
He wanders into mist, and now is lost.
Within his brain what lovely realms of death
Are pictur'd, and what knowledge through the doors
Of his forgetfulness of all the earth
A path may gain? Then turn thee, love, to me:
Was I not worth thy winning, and thy toil,
O earth-born son of Ocean? Melt to rain."

EOS

Level with the summit of that eastern mount,
By slow approach, and like a promontory
Which seems to glide and meet a coming ship,
The pale-gold platform of the morning came
Towards the gliding mount. Against a sky
Of delicate purple, snow-bright courts and halls,
Touch'd with light silvery green, gleaming across,
Fronted by pillars vast, cloud-capitall'd,
With shafts of changeful pearl, all rear'd upon
An isle of clear aerial gold, came floating;
And in the centre, clad in fleecy white,
With lucid lilies in her golden hair,
Eos, sweet Goddess of the Morning, stood.

From the bright peak of that surrounded mount,
One step sufficed to gain the tremulous floor
Whereon the palace of the Morning shone,
Scarcely a bow-shot distant; but that step,
Orion's humbled and still mortal feet
Dared not adventure. In the Goddess' face
Imploringly he gaz'd. "Advance!" she said,
In tones more sweet than when some heavenly bird,
Hid in a rosy cloud, its morning hymn
Warbles unseen, wet with delicious dews,
And to earth's flowers, all looking up in prayer,
Tells of the coming bliss. "Believe — advance!
Or, as the spheres move onward with their song
That calls me to awaken other lands,
That moment will escape which ne'er returns."
Forward Orion stepp'd: the platform bright
Shook like the reflex of a star in water
Mov'd by the breeze, throughout its whole expanse;
And even the palace glisten'd fitfully,
As with electric shiver it sent forth
Odors of flowers divine and all fresh life.
Still stood he where he stepp'd, nor to return
Attempted. To essay one pace beyond
He felt no power — yet onward he advanced
Safe to the Goddess, who, with hand outstretch'd,
Into the palace led him. Grace and strength,
With sense of happy change to finer earth,
Freshness of nature, and belief in good,
Came flowing o'er his soul, and he was bless'd.

'T is always morning somewhere in the world,
And Eos rises, circling constantly
The varied regions of mankind. No pause
Of renovation and of freshening rays
She knows, but evermore her love breathes forth
On field and forest, as on human hope,
Health, beauty, power, thought, action, and advance.
All this Orion witness'd, and rejoiced.

AKINETOS

'T was eve, and Time, his vigorous course pursuing,
Met Akinetos walking by the sea.
At sight of him the Father of the Hours
Paus'd on the sand, — which shrank, grew moist, and trembled
At that unwonted pressure of the God.

And thus with look and accent stern, he spake :

"Thou art the mortal who, with hand unmov'd,
Eatest the fruit of others' toil; whose heart
Is but a vital engine that conveys
Blood, to no purpose, up and down thy frame;
Whose forehead is a large stone sepulchre
Of knowledge ! and whose life but turns to waste
My measur'd hours, and earth's material mass !"

. . . . . .

Whereto the Great Unmov'd no answer made,—
And Time continued, sterner than before :
"O not-to-be-approv'd ! thou Apathy,
Who gazest downward on that empty shell,—
Is it for thee, who bear'st the common lot
Of man, and art his brother in the fields,
From birth to funeral pyre ; is it for thee,
Who didst derive from thy long-living sire
More knowledge than endows far better sons,
Thy lamp to burn within, and turn aside
Thy face from all humanity, or behold it
Without emotion, like some sea-shell'd thing
Staring around from a green hollow'd rock,
Not aiding, loving, caring—hoping aught—
Forgetting Nature, and by her forgot ?"

Whereto, with mildness, Akinetos said,
"Hast thou consider'd of Eternity ?"
"Profoundly have I done so, in my youth,"
Chronos replied, and bow'd his furrow'd head ;
"Most, when my tender feet from Chaos trod
Stumbling,—and, doubtful of my eyes, my hands
The dazzling air explor'd. But, since that date,
So many ages have I told ; so many,
Fleet after fleet on newly opening seas,
Descry before me, that of late my thoughts
Have rather dwelt on all around my path,
With anxious care. Well were it thus with thee."

Then Akinetos calmly spake once more,
With eyes still bent upon the tide-ribb'd sands :
"And dost thou of To-morrow also think ?"
Whereat, as one dismay'd by sudden thought
Of many crowding things that call him thence,
Time, with bent brows, went hurrying on his way.

Slow tow'rds his cave the Great Unmov'd repair'd,
And, with his back against the rock, sat down
Outside, half smiling in the pleasant air ;
And in the lonely silence of the place
He thus, at length, discours'd unto himself:

"Orion, ever active and at work,
Honest and skilful, not to be surpass'd,
Drew misery on himself and those he lov'd ;
Wrought his companions' death,—and now hath found,
At Artemis' hand, his own. So fares it ever
With the world's builder. He, from wall to beam,
From pillar to roof, from shade to corporal form,
From the first vague Thought to the Temple vast,
A ceaseless contest with the crowd endures,
For whom he labors. Why then should we move ?
Our wisdom cannot change whate'er 's decreed,
Nor e'en the acts or thoughts of brainless men :
Why then be mov'd ? Best reason is most vain.
He who will do and suffer, must — and end.
Hence, death is not an evil, since it leads
To somewhat permanent, beyond the noise
Man maketh on the tabor of his will,
Until the small round burst, and pale he falls.
His ear is stuff'd with the grave's earth, yet feels
The inaudible whispers of Eternity,
While Time runs shouting to Oblivion
In the upper fields ! I would not swell that cry."

Thus Akinetos sat from day to day,
Absorb'd in indolent sublimity,
Reviewing thoughts and knowledge o'er and o'er ;

And now he spake, now sang unto himself,
Now sank to brooding silence. From above,
While passing, Time the rock touch'd! — and it ooz'd
Petrific drops — gently at first — and slow.
Reclining lonely in his fix'd repose,
The Great Unmov'd unconsciously became
Attach'd to that he press'd,— and gradually —
While his thoughts drifted to no shore — a part
O' the rock. There clung the dead excrescence, till
Strong hands, descended from Orion, made
Large roads, built markets, granaries, and steep walls,—
Squaring down rocks for use, and common good.

GENIUS

Far out at sea — the sun was high,
While veer'd the wind, and flapp'd the sail —
We saw a snow-white butterfly
Dancing before the fitful gale,
Far out at sea!

The little wanderer, who had lost
His way, of danger nothing knew;
Settled awhile upon the mast,
Then flutter'd o'er the waters blue,
Far out at sea.

Above, there gleam'd the boundless sky;
Beneath, the boundless ocean sheen;
Between them danced the butterfly,
The spirit-life of this vast scene,
Far out at sea.

The tiny soul then soar'd away,
Seeking the clouds on fragile wings,
Lur'd by the brighter, purer ray
Which hope's ecstatic morning brings,
Far out at sea.

Away he sped with shimmering glee!
Scarce seen — now lost — yet onward borne!
Night comes! — with wind and rain — and he
No more will dance before the Morn,
Far out at sea.

He dies unlike his mates, I ween;
Perhaps not sooner, or worse cross'd;
And he hath felt, thought, known, and seen
A larger life and hope — though lost
Far out at sea!

PELTERS OF PYRAMIDS

A shoal of idlers, from a merchant craft
Anchor'd off Alexandria, went ashore,
And mounting asses in their headlong glee,
Round Pompey's Pillar rode with hoots and taunts,
As men oft say, "What art thou more than we?"
Next in a boat they floated up the Nile,
Singing and drinking, swearing senseless oaths,
Shouting, and laughing most derisively
At all majestic scenes. A bank they reach'd,
And clambering up, play'd gambols among tombs;
And in portentous ruins (through whose depths,
The mighty twilight of departed Gods,
Both sun and moon glanced furtive, as in awe)
They hid, and whoop'd, and spat on sacred things.

At length, beneath the blazing sun they lounged
Near a great Pyramid. Awhile they stood
With stupid stare, until resentment grew,
In the recoil of meanness from the vast;
And gathering stones, they with coarse oaths and jibes
(As they would say, "What art thou more than we?")
Pelted the Pyramid! But soon these men,
Hot and exhausted, sat them down to drink —
Wrangled, smok'd, spat, and laugh'd, and drowsily
Curs'd the bald Pyramid, and fell asleep.

Night came: — a little sand went drifting by —
And morn again was in the soft blue heavens.
The broad slopes of the shining Pyramid
Look'd down in their austere simplicity
Upon the glistening silence of the sands
Whereon no trace of mortal dust was seen.

SOLITUDE AND THE LILY

THE LILY

I BEND above the moving stream,
And see myself in my own dream,—
  Heaven passing, while I do not pass.
Something divine pertains to me,
Or I to it ; — reality
  Escapes me on this liquid glass.

SOLITUDE

The changeful clouds that float or poise on high,
Emblem earth's night and day of history :
Renew'd for ever, evermore to die.
  Thy life-dream is thy fleeting loveliness ;
  But mine is concentrated consciousness,
  A life apart from pleasure or distress.
    The grandeur of the Whole
    Absorbs my soul,
  While my caves sigh o'er human littleness.

THE LILY

    Ah, Solitude,
  Of marble Silence fit abode !
  I do prefer my fading face,
  My loss of loveliness and grace,
    With cloud-dreams ever in my view ;
  Also the hope that other eyes
  May share my rapture in the skies,
    And, if illusion, feel it true.

THE SLAVE

A SEA-PIECE, OFF JAMAICA

BEFORE us in the sultry dawn arose
  Indigo-tinted mountains ; and ere noon
  We near'd an isle that lay like a festoon,
And shar'd the ocean's glittering repose.

We saw plantations spotted with white huts;
  Estates midst orange groves and towering trees ;
  Rich yellow lawns embrown'd by soft degrees ;
Plots of intense gold freak'd with shady nuts.

A dead hot silence tranced sea, land, and sky :
  And now a long canoe came gliding forth,
  Wherein there sat an old man fierce and swarth,
Tiger-faced, black-fang'd, and with jaundiced eye.

Pure white, with pale blue chequer'd, and red fold
  Of head-cloth 'neath straw brim, this Master wore ;
  While in the sun-glare stood with high-rais'd oar
A naked Image all of burnish'd gold.

Golden his bones — high-valued in the mart,
  His minted muscles, and his glossy skin ;
  Golden his life of action — but within
The slave is human in a bleeding heart.

THE PLOUGH

A LANDSCAPE IN BERKSHIRE

ABOVE yon sombre swell of land
  Thou seest the dawn's grave orange hue,
With one pale streak like yellow sand,
  And over that a vein of blue.

The air is cold above the woods ;
  All silent is the earth and sky,
Except with his own lonely moods
  The blackbird holds a colloquy.

Over the broad hill creeps a beam,
  Like hope that gilds a good man's brow,
And now ascends the nostril-stream
  Of stalwart horses come to plough.

Ye rigid Ploughmen, bear in mind
  Your labor is for future hours !
Advance — spare not — nor look behind :
  Plough deep and straight with all your powers.

Thomas Lovell Beddoes

FROM "TORRISMOND"

IN A GARDEN BY MOONLIGHT

Veronica. Come then, a song ; a winding gentle song,
To lead me into sleep. Let it be low
As zephyr, telling secrets to his rose,
For I would hear the murmuring of my thoughts ;
And more of voice than of that other music
That grows around the strings of quivering lutes ;
But most of thought ; for with my mind I listen,
And when the leaves of sound are shed upon it,
If there 's no seed remembrance grows not there.
So life, so death ; a song, and then a dream !
Begin before another dewdrop fall
From the soft hold of these disturbed flowers,
For sleep is filling up my senses fast,
And from these words I sink.

SONG

How many times do I love thee, dear ?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity :
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love again ?
Tell me how many beads there are
In a silver chain
Of evening rain,
Unravell'd from the tumbling main,
And threading the eye of a yellow star :
So many times do I love again.

Elvira. She sees no longer : leave her then alone,
Encompass'd by this round and moony night.
A rose-leaf for thy lips, and then good-night :
So life, so death ; a song, and then a dream !

DREAM-PEDLARY

If there were dreams to sell,
What would you buy ?
Some cost a passing bell ;
Some a light sigh,
That shakes from Life's fresh crown
Only a rose-leaf down.
If there were dreams to sell,
Merry and sad to tell,
And the crier rung the bell,
What would you buy ?

A cottage lone and still,
With bowers nigh,
Shadowy, my woes to still,
Until I die.
Such pearl from Life's fresh crown
Fain would I shake me down.
Were dreams to have at will,
This would best heal my ill,
This would I buy.

But there were dreams to sell
Ill didst thou buy ;
Life is a dream, they tell,
Waking, to die.
Dreaming a dream to prize,
Is wishing ghosts to rise ;
And, if I had the spell
To call the buried well,
Which one would I ?

If there are ghosts to raise,
What shall I call
Out of hell's murky haze,
Heaven's blue pall ?
Raise my lov'd long-lost boy
To lead me to his joy.
There are no ghosts to raise ;
Out of death lead no ways ;
Vain is the call.

Know'st thou not ghosts to sue ?
No love thou hast.
Else lie, as I will do,
And breathe thy last.
So out of Life's fresh crown
Fall like a rose-leaf down.
Thus are the ghosts to woo ;
Thus are all dreams made true,
Ever to last !

BALLAD OF HUMAN LIFE

When we were girl and boy together,
  We toss'd about the flowers
  And wreath'd the blushing hours
Into a posy green and sweet.
  I sought the youngest, best,
  And never was at rest
Till I had laid them at thy fairy feet.
But the days of childhood they were fleet,
  And the blooming sweet-briar-breath'd weather,
  When we were boy and girl together.

Then we were lad and lass together,
  And sought the kiss of night
  Before we felt aright,
Sitting and singing soft and sweet.
  The dearest thought of heart
  With thee 't was joy to part,
And the greater half was thine, as meet.
Still my eyelid 's dewy, my veins they beat
  At the starry summer-evening weather,
  When we were lad and lass together.

And we are man and wife together,
  Although thy breast, once bold
  With song, be clos'd and cold
Beneath flowers' roots and birds' light feet.
  Yet sit I by thy tomb,
  And dissipate the gloom
With songs of loving faith and sorrow sweet.
And fate and darkling grave kind dreams do cheat,
  That, while fair life, young hope, despair and death are,
  We 're boy and girl, and lass and lad, and man and wife together.

SONGS FROM "DEATH'S JEST-BOOK"

I

TO SEA, TO SEA!

To sea, to sea! The calm is o'er;
  The wanton water leaps in sport,
And rattles down the pebbly shore;
  The dolphin wheels, the sea-cows snort,
And unseen Mermaids' pearly song
Comes bubbling up, the weeds among.
  Fling broad the sail, dip deep the oar:
  To sea, to sea! the calm is o'er.

To sea, to sea! our wide-wing'd bark
  Shall billowy cleave its sunny way,
And with its shadow, fleet and dark,
  Break the cav'd Tritons' azure day,
Like mighty eagle soaring light
O'er antelopes on Alpine height.
  The anchor heaves, the ship swings free,
  The sails swell full. To sea, to sea!

II

DIRGE

If thou wilt ease thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
  Then sleep, dear, sleep;
And not a sorrow
  Hang any tear on your eye-lashes;
    Lie still and deep,
  Sad soul, until the sea-wave washes
The rim o' the sun to-morrow,
    In eastern sky.

But wilt thou cure thine heart
Of love and all its smart,
  Then die, dear, die;
'T is deeper, sweeter,
  Than on a rose bank to lie dreaming
    With folded eye;
  And then alone, amid the beaming
Of love's stars, thou 'lt meet her
    In eastern sky.

III

ATHULF'S DEATH SONG

A cypress-bough, and a rose-wreath sweet,
A wedding-robe, and a winding-sheet,
  A bridal-bed and a bier.
Thine be the kisses, maid,
  And smiling Love's alarms;
And thou, pale youth, be laid
  In the grave's cold arms.
  Each in his own charms,
    Death and Hymen both are here;
      So up with scythe and torch,
      And to the old church porch,
    While all the bells ring clear:
  And rosy, rosy the bed shall bloom,
  And earthy, earthy heap up the tomb.

Now tremble dimples on your cheek,
Sweet be your lips to taste and speak,
  For he who kisses is near:

By her the bridegod fair,
  In youthful power and force ;
By him the grizard bare,
  Pale knight on a pale horse,
  To woo him to a corpse.
    Death and Hymen both are here ;
      So up with scythe and torch,
      And to the old church porch,
    While all the bells ring clear :
  And rosy, rosy the bed shall bloom,
  And earthy, earthy heap up the tomb.

IV

SECOND DIRGE

We do lie beneath the grass
  In the moonlight, in the shade
Of the yew-tree. They that pass
  Hear us not. We are afraid
    They would envy our delight,
    In our graves by glow-worm night.
Come follow us, and smile as we ;
  We sail to the rock in the ancient waves,
Where the snow falls by thousands into the sea,
  And the drown'd and the shipwreck'd have happy graves.

SONGS FROM "THE BRIDES' TRAGEDY"

I

HESPERUS SINGS

Poor old pilgrim Misery,
  Beneath the silent moon he sate,
A-listening to the screech owl's cry
  And the cold wind's goblin prate ;
Beside him lay his staff of yew
  With wither'd willow twin'd,
His scant gray hair all wet with dew,
  His cheeks with grief ybrin'd ;
    And his cry it was ever, alack !
      Alack, and woe is me !

Anon a wanton imp astray
  His piteous moaning hears,
And from his bosom steals away
  His rosary of tears :
With his plunder fled that urchin elf,
  And hid it in your eyes ;
Then tell me back the stolen pelf,
  Give up the lawless prize ;
    Or your cry shall be ever, alack !
      Alack, and woe is me !

II

LOVE GOES A-HAWKING

A ho ! A ho !
  Love's horn doth blow,
  And he will out a-hawking go.
His shafts are light as beauty's sighs,
And bright as midnight's brightest eyes,
    And round his starry way
The swan-wing'd horses of the skies,
With summer's music in their manes,
Curve their fair necks to zephyr's reins,
    And urge their graceful play.

A ho ! A ho !
  Love's horn doth blow,
  And he will out a-hawking go.
The sparrows flutter round his wrist,
The feathery thieves that Venus kist
    And taught their morning song,
The linnets seek the airy list,
And swallows too, small pets of Spring,
Beat back the gale with swifter wing,
    And dart and wheel along.

A ho ! A ho !
  Love's horn doth blow,
  And he will out a-hawking go.
Now woe to every gnat that skips
To filch the fruit of ladies' lips,
    His felon blood is shed ;
And woe to flies, whose airy ships
On beauty cast their anchoring bite,
And bandit wasp, that naughty wight,
    Whose sting is slaughter-red.

Robert Stephen Hawker

THE SONG OF THE WESTERN MEN

A good sword and a trusty hand!
  A merry heart and true!
King James's men shall understand
  What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fix'd the where and when?
  And shall Trelawny die?
Here 's twenty thousand Cornish men
  Will know the reason why!

Out spake their captain brave and bold,
  A merry wight was he:
"If London Tower were Michael's hold,
  We 'll set Trelawny free!

"We 'll cross the Tamar, land to land,
  The Severn is no stay,
With 'one and all,' and hand in hand,
  And who shall bid us nay?

"And when we come to London Wall,
  A pleasant sight to view,
Come forth! come forth, ye cowards all,
  Here 's men as good as you!

"Trelawny he 's in keep and hold,
  Trelawny he may die;
But here 's twenty thousand Cornish bold,
  Will know the reason why!"

MAWGAN OF MELHUACH

'T was a fierce night when old Mawgan
  died,
Men shudder'd to hear the rolling tide:
The wreckers fled fast from the awful shore,
They had heard strange voices amid the
  roar.

"Out with the boat there," some one cried,—
"Will he never come? we shall lose the tide:
His berth is trim and his cabin stor'd,
He 's a weary long time coming on board."

The old man struggled upon the bed:
He knew the words that the voices said;
Wildly he shriek'd as his eyes grew dim,
"He was dead! he was dead! when I bur-
  ied him."

Hark yet again to the devilish roar,
"He was nimbler once with a ship on shore;
Come! come! old man, 't is a vain delay,
We must make the offing by break of day."

Hard was the struggle, but at the last,
With a stormy pang old Mawgan past,
And away, away, beneath their sight,
Gleam'd the red sail at pitch of night.

FEATHERSTONE'S DOOM

Twist thou and twine! in light and gloom
  A spell is on thine hand;
The wind shall be thy changeful loom,
  Thy web the shifting sand.

Twine from this hour, in ceaseless toil,
  On Blackrock's sullen shore;
Till cordage of the sand shall coil
  Where crested surges roar.

'T is for that hour, when, from the wave,
  Near voices wildly cried;
When thy stern hand no succor gave,
  The cable at thy side.

Twist thou and twine! in light and gloom
  The spell is on thine hand;
The wind shall be thy changeful loom,
  Thy web the shifting sand.

"PATER VESTER PASCIT ILLA"

Our bark is on the waters: wide around
The wandering wave; above, the lonely sky.
Hush! a young sea-bird floats, and that
  quick cry
Shrieks to the levell'd weapon's echoing
  sound,
Grasps its lank wing, and on, with reckless
  bound!
Yet, creature of the surf, a sheltering breast
To-night shall haunt in vain thy far-off nest,
A call unanswer'd search the rocky ground.
Lord of leviathan! when Ocean heard
Thy gathering voice, and sought his native
  breeze;
When whales first plunged with life, and
  the proud deep
Felt unborn tempests heave in troubled
  sleep;

Thou didst provide, e'en for this nameless bird,
Home, and a natural love, amid the surging seas.

THE SILENT TOWER OF BOTTREAU

TINTADGEL bells ring o'er the tide,
The boy leans on his vessel side;
He hears that sound, and dreams of home
Soothe the wild orphan of the foam.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Thus saith their pealing chime:
Youth, manhood, old age past,
"Come to thy God at last."

But why are Bottreau's echoes still?
Her tower stands proudly on the hill;
Yet the strange chough that home hath found,
The lamb lies sleeping on the ground.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Should be her answering chime:
"Come to thy God at last!"
Should echo on the blast.

The ship rode down with courses free,
The daughter of a distant sea:
Her sheet was loose, her anchor stor'd,
The merry Bottreau bells on board.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Rung out Tintadgel chime;
Youth, manhood, old age past,
"Come to thy God at last!"

The pilot heard his native bells
Hang on the breeze in fitful swells;
"Thank God," with reverent brow he cried,
"We make the shore with evening's tide."
"Come to thy God in time!"
It was his marriage chime:
Youth, manhood, old age past,
His bell must ring at last.

"Thank God, thou whining knave, on land,
But thank, at sea, the steersman's hand,"
The captain's voice above the gale:
"Thank the good ship and ready sail."
"Come to thy God in time!"
Sad grew the boding chime:
"Come to thy God at last!"
Boom'd heavy on the blast.

Uprose that sea! as if it heard
The mighty Master's signal-word:
What thrills the captain's whitening lip?
The death-groans of his sinking ship.
"Come to thy God in time!"
Swung deep the funeral chime:
Grace, mercy, kindness past,
"Come to thy God at last!"

Long did the rescued pilot tell—
When gray hairs o'er his forehead fell,
While those around would hear and weep—
That fearful judgment of the deep.
"Come to thy God in time!"
He read his native chime:
Youth, manhood, old age past,
His bell rung out at last.

Still when the storm of Bottreau's waves
Is wakening in his weedy caves,
Those bells, that sullen surges hide,
Peal their deep notes beneath the tide:
"Come to thy God in time!"
Thus saith the ocean chime:
Storm, billow, whirlwind past,
"Come to thy God at last!"

TO ALFRED TENNYSON

THEY told me in their shadowy phrase,
Caught from a tale gone by,
That Arthur, King of Cornish praise,
Died not, and would not die.

Dreams had they, that in fairy bowers
Their living warrior lies,
Or wears a garland of the flowers
That grow in Paradise.

I read the rune with deeper ken,
And thus the myth I trace:—
A bard should rise, mid future men,
The mightiest of his race.

He would great Arthur's deeds rehearse
On gray Dundagel's shore;
And so the King in laurell'd verse
Shall live, and die no more!

Edward, Lord Lytton

(EDWARD LYTTON BULWER)

THE CARDINAL'S SOLILOQUY

FROM "RICHELIEU; OR, THE CONSPIRACY"

Rich. [*reading*]. "In silence, and at night, the Conscience feels
That life should soar to nobler ends than Power."
So sayest thou, sage and sober moralist!
But wert thou tried? Sublime Philosophy,
Thou art the Patriarch's ladder, reaching heaven,
And bright with beckoning angels — but, alas!
We see thee, like the Patriarch, but in dreams,
By the first step, dull-slumbering on the earth.
I am not happy! — with the Titan's lust
I woo'd a goddess, and I clasp a cloud.
When I am dust, my name shall, like a star,
Shine through wan space, a glory, and a prophet
Whereby pale seers shall from their aëry towers
Con all the ominous signs, benign or evil,
That make the potent astrologue of kings.
But shall the Future judge me by the ends
That I have wrought, or by the dubious means
Through which the stream of my renown hath run
Into the many-voiced unfathom'd Time?
Foul in its bed lie weeds, and heaps of slime,
And with its waves — when sparkling in the sun,
Ofttimes the secret rivulets that swell
Its might of waters — blend the hues of blood.
Yet are my sins not those of Circumstance,
That all-pervading atmosphere, wherein
Our spirits, like the unsteady lizard, take
The tints that color, and the food that nurtures?
O! ye, whose hour-glass shifts its tranquil sands
In the unvex'd silence of a student's cell;
Ye, whose untempted hearts have never toss'd
Upon the dark and stormy tides where life
Gives battle to the elements, — and man
Wrestles with man for some slight plank, whose weight
Will bear but one, while round the desperate wretch
The hungry billows roar, and the fierce Fate,
Like some huge monster, dim-seen through the surf,
Waits him who drops; — ye safe and formal men,
Who write the deeds, and with unfeverish hand
Weigh in nice scales the motives of the Great,
Ye cannot know what ye have never tried!
History preserves only the fleshless bones
Of what we are, and by the mocking skull
The would-be wise pretend to guess the features.
Without the roundness and the glow of life
How hideous is the skeleton! Without
The colorings and humanities that clothe
Our errors, the anatomists of schools
Can make our memory hideous.
I have wrought
Great uses out of evil tools, and they
In the time to come may bask beneath the light
Which I have stolen from the angry gods,
And warn their sons against the glorious theft,
Forgetful of the darkness which it broke.
I have shed blood, but I have had no foes
Save those the State had; if my wrath was deadly,
'T is that I felt my country in my veins,
And smote her sons as Brutus smote his own.
And yet I am not happy: blanch'd and sear'd
Before my time; breathing an air of hate,
And seeing daggers in the eyes of men,
And wasting powers that shake the thrones of earth
In contest with the insects; bearding kings
And brav'd by lackies; murder at my bed;
And lone amidst the multitudinous web,
With the dread Three, that are the Fates who hold

The woof and shears — the Monk, the Spy, the Headsman.
And this is power ? Alas ! I am not happy.
[*After a pause.*
And yet the Nile is fretted by the weeds
Its rising roots not up ; but never yet
Did one least barrier by a ripple vex
My onward tide, unswept in sport away.
Am I so ruthless then that I do hate
Them who hate me ? Tush, tush ! I do not hate ;
Nay, I forgive. The Statesman writes the doom,
But the Priest sends the blessing. I forgive them,
But I destroy ; forgiveness is mine own,
Destruction is the State's ! For private life,
Scripture the guide — for public, Machiavel.
Would fortune serve me if the Heaven were wroth ?
For chance makes half my greatness. I was born
Beneath the aspect of a bright-eyed star,
And my triumphant adamant of soul
Is but the fix'd persuasion of success.
Ah ! — here ! — that spasm ! — again ! — How Life and Death
Do wrestle for me momently ! And yet
The King looks pale. I shall outlive the King !
And then, thou insolent Austrian — who didst gibe
At the ungainly, gaunt, and daring lover,
Sleeking thy looks to silken Buckingham,
Thou shalt — no matter ! I have outliv'd love.
O beautiful, all golden, gentle youth !
Making thy palace in the careless front
And hopeful eye of man, ere yet the soul
Hath lost the memories which (so Plato dream'd)
Breath'd glory from the earlier star it dwelt in —
Oh, for one gale from thine exulting morning,
Stirring amidst the roses, where of old
Love shook the dew-drops from his glancing hair !
Could I recall the past, or had not set
The prodigal treasures of the bankrupt soul
In one slight bark upon the shoreless sea ;
The yoked steer, after his day of toil,
Forgets the goad, and rests : to me alike
Or day or night — Ambition has no rest !
Shall I resign ? who can resign himself ?
For custom is ourself ; as drink and food
Become our bone and flesh, the aliments
Nurturing our nobler part, the mind, thoughts, dreams,
Passions, and aims, in the revolving cycle
Of the great alchemy, at length are made
Our mind itself ; and yet the sweets of leisure,
An honor'd home far from these base intrigues,
An eyrie on the heaven-kiss'd heights of wisdom. —
[*Taking up the book.*
Speak to me, moralist ! — I 'll heed thy counsel.

WHEN STARS ARE IN THE QUIET SKIES

When stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I pine for thee ;
Bend on me then thy tender eyes,
As stars look on the sea !
For thoughts, like waves that glide by night,
Are stillest when they shine ;
Mine earthly love lies hush'd in light
Beneath the heaven of thine.

There is an hour when angels keep
Familiar watch o'er men,
When coarser souls are wrapp'd in sleep —
Sweet spirit, meet me then !
There is an hour when holy dreams
Through slumber fairest glide ;
And in that mystic hour it seems
Thou shouldst be by my side.

My thoughts of thee too sacred are
For daylight's common beam :
I can but know thee as my star,
My angel and my dream ;
When stars are in the quiet skies,
Then most I pine for thee ;
Bend on me then thy tender eyes,
As stars look on the sea !

Note. Another lyric by Lord Lytton will be found in the Biographical Notes.

William Edmondstoune Aytoun

THE EXECUTION OF MONTROSE

Come hither, Evan Cameron!
  Come, stand beside my knee:
I hear the river roaring down
  Towards the wintry sea.
There 's shouting on the mountain-side,
  There 's war within the blast;
Old faces look upon me,
  Old forms go trooping past:
I hear the pibroch wailing
  Amidst the din of fight,
And my dim spirit wakes again
  Upon the verge of night.

'T was I that led the Highland host
  Through wild Lochaber's snows,
What time the plaided clans came down
  To battle with Montrose.
I 've told thee how the Southrons fell
  Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
  By Inverlochy's shore.
I 've told thee how we swept Dundee,
  And tam'd the Lindsays' pride;
But never have I told thee yet
  How the great Marquis died.

A traitor sold him to his foes;
  O deed of deathless shame!
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet
  With one of Assynt's name —
Be it upon the mountain's side,
  Or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone,
  Or back'd by armed men —
Face him, as thou wouldst face the man
  Who wrong'd thy sire's renown;
Remember of what blood thou art,
  And strike the caitiff down!

They brought him to the Watergate,
  Hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there,
  And not a fenceless man.
They set him high upon a cart,
  The hangman rode below,
They drew his hands behind his back
  And bar'd his noble brow.
Then, as a hound is slipp'd from leash,
  They cheer'd the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout
  And bade him pass along.

It would have made a brave man's heart
  Grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes
  Bent down on that array.
There stood the Whig west-country lords,
  In balcony and bow;
There sat their gaunt and wither'd dames,
  And their daughters all a-row.
And every open window
  Was full as full might be
With black-rob'd Covenanting carles,
  That goodly sport to see!

But when he came, though pale and wan,
  He look'd so great and high,
So noble was his manly front,
  So calm his steadfast eye,
The rabble rout forbore to shout,
  And each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul
  Was face to face with death.
And then a mournful shudder
  Through all the people crept,
And some that came to scoff at him
  Now turn'd aside and wept.

But onwards — always onwards,
  In silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant labor'd,
  Till it reach'd the house of doom.
Then first a woman's voice was heard
  In jeer and laughter loud,
And an angry cry and a hiss arose
  From the heart of the tossing crowd:
Then as the Graeme look'd upwards,
  He saw the ugly smile
Of him who sold his king for gold,
  The master-fiend Argyle!

The Marquis gaz'd a moment,
  And nothing did he say,
But the cheek of Argyle grew ghastly pale
  And he turn'd his eyes away.
The painted harlot by his side,
  She shook through every limb,
For a roar like thunder swept the street,
  And hands were clench'd at him;
And a Saxon soldier cried aloud,
  "Back, coward, from thy place!

For seven long years thou hast not dar'd
To look him in the face."

Had I been there with sword in hand,
And fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets
Had peal'd the slogan-cry.
Not all their troops of trampling horse,
Nor might of mailed men,
Not all the rebels in the south
Had borne us backwards then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath
Had trod as free as air,
Or I, and all who bore my name,
Been laid around him there!

It might not be. They placed him next
Within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish kings were thron'd
Amidst their nobles all.
But there was dust of vulgar feet
On that polluted floor,
And perjur'd traitors fill'd the place
Where good men sate before.
With savage glee came Warristoun
To read the murderous doom;
And then uprose the great Montrose
In the middle of the room.

"Now, by my faith as belted knight,
And by the name I bear,
And by the bright Saint Andrew's cross
That waves above us there,
Yea, by a greater, mightier oath —
And oh, that such should be!
By that dark stream of royal blood
That lies 'twixt you and me,
I have not sought in battle-field
A wreath of such renown,
Nor dar'd I hope on my dying day
To win the martyr's crown!

"There is a chamber far away
Where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have nam'd for me
Than by my father's grave.
For truth and right, 'gainst treason's might,
This hand hath always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still
In the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower,
Give every town a limb,
And God who made shall gather them:
I go from you to Him!"

The morning dawn'd full darkly,
The rain came flashing down,
And the jagged streak of the levin-bolt
Lit up the gloomy town:
The thunder crash'd across the heaven,
The fatal hour was come;
Yet aye broke in with muffled beat
The 'larum of the drum.
There was madness on the earth below
And anger in the sky,
And young and old, and rich and poor,
Came forth to see him die.

Ah, God! that ghastly gibbet!
How dismal 't is to see
The great tall spectral skeleton,
The ladder and the tree!
Hark! hark! it is the clash of arms —
The bells begin to toll —
"He is coming! he is coming!
God's mercy on his soul!"
One last long peal of thunder:
The clouds are clear'd away,
And the glorious sun once more looks down
Amidst the dazzling day.

"He is coming! he is coming!"
Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was lustre in his eye,
And he never walk'd to battle
More proudly than to die:
There was color in his visage,
Though the cheeks of all were wan,
And they marvell'd as they saw him pass,
That great and goodly man!

He mounted up the scaffold,
And he turn'd him to the crowd;
But they dar'd not trust the people,
So he might not speak aloud.
But he look'd upon the heavens,
And they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether
The eye of God shone through;
Yet a black and murky battlement
Lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within —
All else was calm and still.

The grim Geneva ministers
With anxious scowl drew near,
As you have seen the ravens flock
Around the dying deer.
He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee,
And veil'd his face for Christ's dear grace
Beneath the gallows-tree.
Then radiant and serene he rose,
And cast his cloak away :
For he had ta'en his latest look
Of earth and sun and day.

A beam of light fell o'er him,
Like a glory round the shriven,
And he climb'd the lofty ladder
As it were the path to heaven.
Then came a flash from out the cloud,
And a stunning thunder-roll ;
And no man dar'd to look aloft,
For fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound,
A hush and then a groan ;
And darkness swept across the sky —
The work of death was done !

MASSACRE OF THE MACPHERSON

Fhairshon swore a feud
Against the clan M'Tavish —
March'd into their land
To murder and to rafish ;
For he did resolve
To extirpate the vipers,
With four-and-twenty men,
And five-and-thirty pipers.

But when he had gone
Half-way down Strath-Canaan,
Of his fighting tail
Just three were remainin'.
They were all he had
To back him in ta battle :
All the rest had gone
Off to drive ta cattle.

"Fery coot !" cried Fhairshon —
So my clan disgraced is ;
Lads, we 'll need to fight
Pefore we touch ta peasties.
Here 's Mhic-Mac-Methusaleh
Coming wi' his fassals —
Gillies seventy-three,
And sixty Dhuinéwassels !"

"Coot tay to you, sir !
Are you not ta Fhairshon ?
Was you coming here
To visit any person ?
You are a plackguard, sir ?
It is now six hundred
Coot long years, and more,
Since my glen was plunder'd."

"Fat is tat you say ?
Dar you cock your peaver ?
I will teach you, sir,
Fat is coot pehavior !
You shall not exist
For another day more ;
I will shot you, sir,
Or stap you with my claymore !"

"I am fery glad
To learn what you mention,
Since I can prevent
Any such intention."
So Mhic-Mac-Methusaleh
Gave some warlike howls,
Trew his skhian-dhu,
An' stuck it in his powels.

In this fery way
Tied ta faliant Fhairshon,
Who was always thought
A superior person.
Fhairshon had a son,
Who married Noah's daughter,
And nearly spoil'd ta flood
By trinking up ta water —

Which he would have done,
I at least believe it,
Had ta mixture peen
Only half Glenlivet.
This is all my tale :
Sirs, I hope 't is new t' ye !
Here 's your fery good healths,
And tamn ta whusky tuty !

POETS OF QUALITY

Thomas Love Peacock

THE MEN OF GOTHAM

SEAMEN three ! what men be ye ?
Gotham's three Wise Men we be.
Whither in your bowl so free ?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim ; the moon doth shine ;
And our ballast is old wine :
And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift ?
I am he they call Old Care.
Here on board we will thee lift.
No : I may not enter there.
Wherefore so ? 'T is Jove's decree —
In a bowl Care may not be :
In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll ?
No : in charmed bowl we swim.
What the charm that floats the bowl ?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim ; the moon doth shine ;
And our ballast is old wine :
And your ballast is old wine.

THE WAR-SONG OF DINAS VAWR

THE mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter ;
We therefore deem'd it meeter
To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition ;
We met an host and quell'd it ;
We forced a strong position
And kill'd the men who held it.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rush'd to meet us ;
We met them, and o'erthrew them :
They struggled hard to beat us,
But we conquer'd them, and slew them.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
The king march'd forth to catch us :
His rage surpass'd all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars ;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sack'd his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off.

We there, in strife bewildering,
Spilt blood enough to swim in :
We orphan'd many children
And widow'd many women.
The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen :
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearmen and the bowmen.

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoan'd them,
Two thousand head of cattle
And the head of him who own'd them :
Ednyfed, King of Dyfed,
His head was borne before us ;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow, our chorus.

MARGARET LOVE PEACOCK

THREE YEARS OLD

LONG night succeeds thy little day :
O, blighted blossom ! can it be
That this gray stone and grassy clay
Have clos'd our anxious care of thee ?

The half-form'd speech of artless thought,
That spoke a mind beyond thy years,
The song, the dance by Nature taught,
The sunny smiles, the transient tears,

The symmetry of face and form,
The eye with light and life replete,
The little heart so fondly warm,
The voice so musically sweet, —

These, lost to hope, in memory yet
Around the hearts that lov'd thee cling,
Shadowing with long and vain regret
The too fair promise of thy Spring.

Winthrop Mackworth Praed

THE VICAR

SOME years ago, ere time and taste
  Had turn'd our parish topsy-turvy,
When Darnel Park was Darnel Waste,
  And roads as little known as scurvy,
The man who lost his way between
  St. Mary's Hill and Sandy Thicket
Was always shown across the green,
  And guided to the parson's wicket.

Back flew the bolt of lissom lath;
  Fair Margaret, in her tidy kirtle,
Led the lorn traveller up the path
  Through clean-clipp'd rows of box and myrtle;
And Don and Sancho, Tramp and Tray,
  Upon the parlor steps collected,
Wagg'd all their tails, and seem'd to say,
  "Our master knows you; you're expected."

Up rose the reverend Doctor Brown,
  Up rose the doctor's "winsome marrow;"
The lady laid her knitting down,
  Her husband clasp'd his ponderous Barrow.
Whate'er the stranger's caste or creed,
  Pundit or papist, saint or sinner,
He found a stable for his steed,
  And welcome for himself, and dinner.

If, when he reach'd his journey's end,
  And warm'd himself in court or college,
He had not gain'd an honest friend,
  And twenty curious scraps of knowledge;
If he departed as he came,
  With no new light on love or liquor,—
Good sooth, the traveller was to blame,
  And not the vicarage, nor the vicar.

His talk was like a stream which runs
  With rapid change from rocks to roses;
It slipp'd from politics to puns;
  It pass'd from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
  The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
  For dressing eels or shoeing horses.

He was a shrewd and sound divine,
  Of loud dissent the mortal terror;
And when, by dint of page and line,
  He 'stablish'd truth or startled error,
The Baptist found him far too deep,
  The Deist sigh'd with saving sorrow,
And the lean Levite went to sleep
  And dream'd of tasting pork to-morrow.

His sermon never said or show'd
  That earth is foul, that heaven is gracious,
Without refreshment on the road
  From Jerome, or from Athanasius;
And sure a righteous zeal inspir'd
  The hand and head that penn'd and plann'd them,
For all who understood admir'd,
  And some who did not understand them.

He wrote too, in a quiet way,
  Small treatises, and smaller verses,
And sage remarks on chalk and clay,
  And hints to noble lords and nurses;
True histories of last year's ghost;
  Lines to a ringlet or a turban;
And trifles to the Morning Post,
  And nothings for Sylvanus Urban.

He did not think all mischief fair,
  Although he had a knack of joking;
He did not make himself a bear,
  Although he had a taste for smoking;
And when religious sects ran mad,
  He held, in spite of all his learning,
That if a man's belief is bad,
  It will not be improv'd by burning.

And he was kind, and lov'd to sit
  In the low hut or garnish'd cottage,
And praise the farmer's homely wit,
  And share the widow's homelier pottage.
At his approach complaint grew mild,
  And when his hand unbarr'd the shutter
The clammy lips of fever smil'd
  The welcome which they could not utter.

He always had a tale for me
  Of Julius Cæsar or of Venus;
From him I learn'd the rule of three,
  Cat's-cradle, leap-frog, and *Quæ genus*.
I used to singe his powder'd wig,
  To steal the staff he put such trust in,
And make the puppy dance a jig
  When he began to quote Augustine.

Alack, the change! In vain I look
For haunts in which my boyhood trifled;
The level lawn, the trickling brook,
The trees I climb'd, the beds I rifled.
The church is larger than before,
You reach it by a carriage entry:
It holds three hundred people more,
And pews are fitted for the gentry.

Sit in the vicar's seat: you 'll hear
The doctrine of a gentle Johnian,
Whose hand is white, whose voice is clear,
Whose tone is very Ciceronian.
Where is the old man laid? Look down,
And construe on the slab before you:
"*Hic jacet Gulielmus Brown,*
Vir nullâ non donandus lauro."

THE NEWLY-WEDDED

Now the rite is duly done,
Now the word is spoken,
And the spell has made us one
Which may ne'er be broken;
Rest we, dearest, in our home,
Roam we o'er the heather:
We shall rest, and we shall roam,
Shall we not? together.

From this hour the summer rose
Sweeter breathes to charm us;
From this hour the winter snows
Lighter fall to harm us:
Fair or foul — on land or sea —
Come the wind or weather,
Best and worst, whate'er they be,
We shall share together.

Death, who friend from friend can part,
Brother rend from brother,
Shall but link us, heart and heart,
Closer to each other:
We will call his anger play,
Deem his dart a feather,
When we meet him on our way
Hand in hand together.

Charles Hartley Langhorne

THEOCRITUS

THEOCRITUS! Theocritus! ah, thou hadst pleasant dreams
Of the crystal spring Burinna, and the Haleus' murmuring streams;
Of Physcus, and Neaethus, and fair Arethusa's fount,
Of Lacinion's beetling crag, and Latymnus' woody mount;
Of the fretted rocks and antres hoar that overhang the sea,
And the sapphire sky and thymy plains of thy own sweet Sicily;
And of the nymphs of Sicily, that dwelt in oak and pine —
Theocritus! Theocritus! what pleasant dreams were thine!

And of the merry rustics who tend the goats and sheep,
And the maids who trip to milk the cows at morning's dewy peep,
Of Clearista with her locks of brightest sunny hair,
And the saucy girl Eunica, and sweet Chloe kind and fair;
And of those highly favor'd ones, Endymion and Adonis,
Loved by Selena the divine, and the beauteous Dionis;
Of the silky-hair'd caprella, and the gentle lowing kine —
Theocritus! Theocritus! what pleasant dreams were thine!

Of the spring time, and the summer, and the zephyr's balmy breeze;
Of the dainty flowers, and waving elms, and the yellow humming bees;
Of the rustling poplar and the oak, the tamarisk and the beech,
The dog-rose and anemone, — thou hadst a dream of each!
Of the galingale and hyacinth, and the lily's snowy hue,
The couch-grass, and green maiden-hair, and celandine pale blue,
The gold-bedropt cassidony, the fern, and sweet woodbine —

Theocritus! Theocritus! what pleasant dreams were thine!

Of the merry harvest-home, all beneath the good green tree,
The poppies and the spikes of corn, the shouting and the glee
Of the lads so blithe and healthy, and the girls so gay and neat,
And the dance they lead around the tree with ever twinkling feet;
And the bushy piles of lentisk to rest the aching brow,
And reach and pluck the damson down from the overladen bough,
And munch the roasted bean at ease, and quaff the Ptelean wine —
Theocritus! Theocritus! what pleasant dreams were thine!

And higher dreams were thine to dream — of Heracles the brave,
And Polydeukes good at need, and Castor strong to save;
Of Dionysius and the woe he wrought the Theban king;
And of Zeus the mighty centre of Olympus' glittering ring;
Of Tiresias, the blind old man, the fam'd Aonian seer;
Of Hecatè, and Cthonian Dis, whom all mankind revere;
And of Daphnis lying down to die beneath the leafy vine —
Theocritus! Theocritus! what pleasant dreams were thine!

But mostly sweet and soft thy dreams — of Cypris' loving kiss,
Of the dark-haired maids of Corinth, and the feasts of Sybaris;
Of alabaster vases of Assyrian perfume,
Of ebony, and gold, and pomp, and softly-curtain'd room;
Of Faunus piping in the woods to the Satyrs' noisy rout,
And the saucy Panisks mocking him with many a jeer and flout;
And of the tender-footed Hours, and Pieria's tuneful Nine —
Theocritus! Theocritus! what pleasant dreams were thine!

THE ROISTERERS

Richard Harris Barham

("THOMAS INGOLDSBY")

THE JACKDAW OF RHEIMS

THE Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair!
Bishop and abbot and prior were there;
Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a squire,
With a great many more of lesser degree, —
In sooth, a goodly company;
And they serv'd the Lord Primate on bended knee.
Never, I ween,
Was a prouder seen,
Read of in books, or dreamt of in dreams,
Than the Cardinal Lord Archbishop of Rheims!

In and out
Through the motley rout,
That little Jackdaw kept hopping about;
Here and there
Like a dog in a fair,
Over comfits and cates,
And dishes and plates,
Cowl and cope, and rochet and pall,
Mitre and crosier! he hopp'd upon all!
With a saucy air,
He perch'd on the chair
Where, in state, the great Lord Cardinal sat,
In the great Lord Cardinal's great red hat;
And he peer'd in the face
Of his Lordship's Grace,
With a satisfied look, as if he would say,
"We two are the greatest folks here to-day!"
And the priests, with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in that little Jackdaw!"

The feast was over, the board was clear'd,
The flawns and the custards had all disappear'd,
And six little Singing-boys, — dear little souls!
In nice clean faces, and nice white stoles,
Came in order due,
Two by two,
Marching that grand refectory through.
A nice little boy held a golden ewer,
Emboss'd and fill'd with water, as pure
As any that flows between Rheims and Namur,
Which a nice little boy stood ready to catch
In a fine golden hand-basin made to match.
Two nice little boys, rather more grown,
Carried lavender-water and eau-de-Cologne;
And a nice little boy had a nice cake of soap,
Worthy of washing the hands of the Pope.
One little boy more
A napkin bore,
Of the best white diaper, fringed with pink,
And a Cardinal's hat mark'd in "permanent ink."

The great Lord Cardinal turns at the sight
Of these nice little boys dress'd all in white:
From his finger he draws
His costly turquoise;
And, not thinking at all about little Jackdaws,
Deposits it straight
By the side of his plate,
While the nice little boys on his Eminence wait;
Till, when nobody 's dreaming of any such thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!
. . . . . .
There 's a cry and a shout,
And a deuce of a rout,
And nobody seems to know what they 're about,
But the monks have their pockets all turn'd inside out;
The friars are kneeling,
And hunting, and feeling
The carpet, the floor, and the walls, and the ceiling.
The Cardinal drew
Off each plum-color'd shoe,
And left his red stockings expos'd to the view:
He peeps, and he feels
In the toes and the heels;
They turn up the dishes, — they turn up the plates, —
They take up the poker and poke out the grates,
— They turn up the rugs,
They examine the mugs:
But no! — no such thing;
They can't find THE RING!
And the Abbot declar'd that, "when nobody twigg'd it,
Some rascal or other had popp'd in and prigg'd it!"

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He call'd for his candle, his bell, and his book:
In holy anger, and pious grief,
He solemnly curs'd that rascally thief!
He curs'd him at board, he curs'd him in bed,
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head!
He curs'd him in sleeping, that every night
He should dream of the devil, and wake in a fright;
He curs'd him in eating, he curs'd him in drinking,
He curs'd him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking;
He curs'd him in sitting, in standing, in lying;
He curs'd him in walking, in riding, in flying;
He curs'd him in living, he curs'd him in dying!
Never was heard such a terrible curse!
But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seem'd one penny the worse!

The day was gone,
The night came on,
The monks and the friars they search'd till dawn;
When the sacristan saw,
On crumpled claw,
Come limping a poor little lame Jackdaw.
No longer gay,
As on yesterday;
His feathers all seem'd to be turn'd the wrong way;

His pinions droop'd — he could hardly stand,
His head was as bald as the palm of your hand ;
His eye so dim,
So wasted each limb,
That, heedless of grammar, they all cried, "THAT 'S HIM !
That 's the scamp that has done this scandalous thing !
That 's the thief that has got my Lord Cardinal's Ring ! "
The poor little Jackdaw,
When the monks he saw,
Feebly gave vent to the ghost of a caw ;
And turn'd his bald head, as much as to say,
" Pray, be so good as to walk this way ! "
Slower and slower
He limp'd on before,
Till they came to the back of the belfry-door,
Where the first thing they saw,
Midst the sticks and the straw,
Was the RING, in the nest of that little Jackdaw.

Then the great Lord Cardinal call'd for his book,
And off that terrible curse he took ;
The mute expression
Serv'd in lieu of confession,
And, being thus coupled with full restitution,
The Jackdaw got plenary absolution !
— When those words were heard,
That poor little bird
Was so changed in a moment, 't was really absurd.
He grew sleek and fat ;
In addition to that,
A fresh crop of feathers came thick as a mat.
His tail waggled more
Even than before ;
But no longer it wagg'd with an impudent air,
No longer he perch'd on the Cardinal's chair.
He hopp'd now about
With a gait devout ;
At matins, at vespers, he never was out ;
And, so far from any more pilfering deeds,
He always seem'd telling the Confessor's beads.

If any one lied, or if any one swore,
Or slumber'd in pray'r-time and happen'd to snore,
That good Jackdaw
Would give a great " Caw ! "
As much as to say, " Don't do so any more ! "
While many remark'd, as his manners they saw,
That they " never had known such a pious Jackdaw ! "
He long liv'd the pride
Of that country side,
And at last in the odor of sanctity died ;
When, as words were too faint
His merits to paint,
The Conclave determin'd to make him a Saint ;
And on newly-made Saints and Popes, as you know,
It 's the custom, at Rome, new names to bestow,
So they canoniz'd him by the name of Jem Crow !

MR. BARNEY MAGUIRE'S ACCOUNT OF THE CORONATION

OCH ! the Coronation ! what celebration
For emulation can with it compare ?
When to Westminster the Royal Spinster,
And the Duke of Leinster, all in order did repair !
'T was there you 'd see the New Polishemen
Make a scrimmage at half after four,
And the Lords and Ladies, and the Miss O'Gradys,
All standing round before the Abbey door.

Their pillows scorning, that self-same morning
Themselves adorning, all by the candle-light,
With roses and lilies, and daffy-down-dillies
And gould and jewels, and rich di'monds bright.
And then approaches five hundred coaches,
With Gineral Dullbeak. — Och ! 't was mighty fine
To see how asy bould Corporal Casey,
With his sword drawn, prancing made them kape the line.

Then the Guns' alarums, and the King of Arums,
All in his Garters and his Clarence shoes,
Opening the massy doors to the bould Ambassydors,
The Prince of Potboys, and great haythen Jews :
'T would have made you crazy to see Esterhazy
All jool's from his jasey to his di'mond boots,
With Alderman Harmer, and that swate charmer
The famale heiress, Miss Anjā-ly Coutts.

And Wellington, walking with his swoord drawn, talking
To Hill and Hardinge, haroes of great fame :
And Sir De Lacy, and the Duke Dalmasey
(They call'd him Sowlt afore he changed his name),
Themselves presading Lord Melbourne, lading
The Queen, the darling, to her royal chair,
And that fine ould fellow, the Duke of Pell-Mello,
The Queen of Portingal's Chargy-de-fair.

Then the noble Prussians, likewise the Russians,
In fine laced jackets with their goulden cuffs,
And the Bavarians, and the proud Hungarians,
And Everythingarians all in furs and muffs.
Then Misther Spaker, with Misther Pays the Quaker,
All in the gallery you might persave ;
But Lord Brougham was missing, and gone a-fishing,
Ounly crass Lord Essex would not give him lave.

There was Baron Alten himself exalting,
And Prince Von Schwartzenburg, and many more ;
Och ! I 'd be bother'd and entirely smother'd
To tell the half of 'em was to the fore ;
With the swate Peeresses, in their crowns and dresses,
And Aldermanesses, and the Boord of Works ;
But Mehemet Ali said, quite gintaly,
"I 'd be proud to see the likes among the Turks !"

Then the Queen, Heaven bless her ! och ! they did dress her
In her purple garaments and her goulden Crown ;
Like Venus, or Hebe, or the Queen of Sheby,
With eight young ladies houlding up her gown.
Sure 't was grand to see her, also for to he-ar
The big drums bating, and the trumpets blow,
And Sir George Smart ! Oh ! he play'd a Consarto,
With his four and twenty fiddlers all on a row.

Then the Lord Archbishop held a goulden dish up,
For to resave her bounty and great wealth,
Saying, "Plase your glory, great Queen Vic-tory,
Ye 'll give the Clargy lave to drink your health !"
Then his Riverence, retrating, discoors'd the mating :
"Boys ! Here 's your Queen ! deny it if you can ;
And if any bould traitor, or infarior craythur
Sneezes at that, I 'd like to see the man !"

Then the Nobles kneeling to the Pow'rs appealing,
"Heaven send your Majesty a glorious reign !"
And Sir Claudius Hunter he did confront her,
All in his scarlet gown and goulden chain.
The great Lord May'r, too, sat in his chair too,
But mighty sarious, looking fit to cry,
For the Earl of Surrey, all in his hurry,
Throwing the thirteens, hit him in his eye.

Then there was preaching, and good store of speeching,
With Dukes and Marquises on bended knee ;

And they did splash her with real Macasshur,
And the Queen said, "Ah! then thank ye all for me!"
Then the trumpets braying, and the organ playing,
And the sweet trombones, with their silver tones;
But Lord Rolle was rolling; — 't was mighty consoling
To think his Lordship did not break his bones!

Then the crames and custard, and the beef and mustard,
All on the tombstones like a poultherer's shop;
With lobsters and white-bait, and other swate-meats,
And wine and nagus, and Imparial Pop!

There was cakes and apples in all the Chapels,
With fine polonies, and rich mellow pears, —
Och! the Count Von Strogonoff, sure he got prog enough,
The sly ould Divil, undernathe the stairs.

Then the cannons thunder'd, and the people wonder'd,
Crying, "God save Victoria, our Royal Queen!" —
Och! if myself should live to be a hundred,
Sure it 's the proudest day that I 'll have seen! —
And now, I 've ended, what I pretended,
This narration splendid in swate poe-thry,
Ye dear bewitcher, just hand the pitcher,
Faith, it 's myself that 's getting dhry.

William Maginn

THE IRISHMAN AND THE LADY

There was a lady liv'd at Leith,
A lady very stylish, man;
And yet, in spite of all her teeth,
She fell in love with an Irishman —
A nasty, ugly Irishman,
A wild, tremendous Irishman,
A tearing, swearing, thumping, bumping, ranting, roaring Irishman.

His face was no ways beautiful,
For with small-pox 't was scarr'd across;
And the shoulders of the ugly dog
Were almost double a yard across.
Oh, the lump of an Irishman,
The whiskey-devouring Irishman,
The great he-rogue with his wonderful brogue — the fighting, rioting Irishman.

One of his eyes was bottle-green,
And the other eye was out, my dear;
And the calves of his wicked-looking legs
Were more than two feet about, my dear.
Oh, the great big Irishman,
The rattling, battling Irishman —
The stamping, ramping, swaggering, staggering, leathering swash of an Irishman.

He took so much of Lundy-foot
That he used to snort and snuffle — O!
And in shape and size the fellow's neck
Was as bad as the neck of a buffalo.
Oh, the horrible Irishman,
The thundering, blundering Irishman—
The slashing, dashing, smashing, lashing, thrashing, hashing Irishman.

His name was a terrible name, indeed,
Being Timothy Thady Mulligan;
And whenever he emptied his tumbler of punch
He 'd not rest till he fill'd it full again.
The boozing, bruising Irishman,
The 'toxicated Irishman —
The whiskey, frisky, rummy, gummy, brandy, no dandy Irishman.

This was the lad the lady lov'd,
Like all the girls of quality;
And he broke the skulls of the men of Leith,
Just by the way of jollity.
Oh, the leathering Irishman,
The barbarous, savage Irishman —
The hearts of the maids, and the gentlemen's heads, were bother'd I 'm sure by this Irishman.

THE SOLDIER-BOY

I GIVE my soldier-boy a blade,
  In fair Damascus fashion'd well ;
Who first the glittering falchion sway'd,
  Who first beneath its fury fell,
I know not ; but I hope to know
  That for no mean or hireling trade,
To guard no feeling base or low,
  I give my soldier-boy a blade.

Cool, calm, and clear, the lucid flood
  In which its tempering work was done :
As calm, as clear, as cool of mood,
  Be thou whene'er it sees the sun.
For country's claim, at honor's call,
  For outraged friend, insulted maid,
At mercy's voice to bid it fall,
  I give my soldier-boy a blade.

The eye which mark'd its peerless edge,
  The hand that weigh'd its balanced poise,
Anvil and pincers, forge and wedge,
  Are gone with all their flame and noise —
And still the gleaming sword remains ;
  So, when in dust I low am laid,
Remember by these heart-felt strains,
  I gave my soldier-boy a blade.

Francis Mahony

("FATHER PROUT")

THE SHANDON BELLS

Sabbata pango ;
Fvnera plango ;
Solemnia clango.
INSCRIPTION ON AN OLD BELL.

WITH deep affection
And recollection
I often think of
  Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
  Their magic spells.
On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,
  Sweet Cork, of thee,
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
  Of the river Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
  Cathedral shrine,
While at a glibe rate
Brass tongues would vibrate —
But all their music
  Spoke naught like thine ;
For memory, dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of the belfry, knelling
  Its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
  Of the river Lee.

I've heard bells tolling
Old Adrian's Mole in,
Their thunder rolling
  From the Vatican,
And cymbals glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
  Of Notre Dame ;
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber,
  Pealing solemnly :
Oh ! the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
  Of the river Lee.

There 's a bell in Moscow ;
While on tower and kiosk oh !
In Saint Sophia
  The Turkman gets,
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer,
From the tapering summit
  Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them ;
But there 's an anthem
  More dear to me :
'T is the bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
  Of the river Lee.

MEDITATIVE POETS

William Sidney Walker

DEATH'S ALCHEMY

They say that thou wert lovely on thy bier,
More lovely than in life; that when the thrall
Of earth was loos'd, it seem'd as though a pall
Of years were lifted, and thou didst appear
Such as of old amidst thy home's calm sphere
Thou sat'st, a kindly Presence felt by all
In joy or grief, from morn to evening-fall,
The peaceful Genius of that mansion dear.
Was it the craft of all-persuading Love
That wrought this marvel? or is Death indeed
A mighty master, gifted from above
With alchemy benign, to wounded hearts
Minist'ring thus, by quaint and subtle arts,
Strange comfort, whereon after-thought may feed?

Hartley Coleridge

TO THE NAUTILUS

Where Ausonian summers glowing
Warm the deep to life and joyance,
And gentle zephyrs, nimbly blowing,
Wanton with the waves that flowing
By many a land of ancient glory,
And many an isle renown'd in story,
Leap along with gladsome buoyance,
There, Marinere,
Dost thou appear
In faery pinnace gaily flashing,
Through the white foam proudly dashing,
The joyous playmate of the buxom breeze,
The fearless fondling of the mighty seas.

Thou the light sail boldly spreadest,
O'er the furrow'd waters gliding,
Thou nor wreck nor foeman dreadest,
Thou nor helm nor compass needest,
While the sun is bright above thee,
While the bounding surges love thee:
In their deepening bosoms hiding
Thou canst not fear,
Small Marinere,
For though the tides with restless motion
Bear thee to the desert ocean,
Far as the ocean stretches to the sky,
'T is all thine own, 't is all thy empery.
Lame is art, and her endeavor
Follows nature's course but slowly,
Guessing, toiling, seeking ever,
Still improving, perfect never;
Little Nautilus, thou showest
Deeper wisdom than thou knowest,
Lore, which man should study lowly:
Bold faith and cheer,
Small Marinere,
Are thine within thy pearly dwelling:
Thine, a law of life compelling,
Obedience, perfect, simple, glad and free,
To the great will that animates the sea.

THE BIRTH OF SPEECH

What was 't awaken'd first the untried ear
Of that sole man who was all human kind?
Was it the gladsome welcome of the wind,
Stirring the leaves that never yet were sere?
The four mellifluous streams which flow'd so near,
Their lulling murmurs all in one combin'd?
The note of bird unnam'd? The startled hind
Bursting the brake — in wonder, not in fear,
Of her new lord? Or did the holy ground
Send forth mysterious melody to greet
The gracious pressure of immaculate feet?

Did viewless seraphs rustle all around,
Making sweet music out of air as sweet,
Or his own voice awake him with its sound ?

WHITHER?

WHITHER is gone the wisdom and the power
That ancient sages scatter'd with the notes
Of thought-suggesting lyres ? The music floats
In the void air ; e'en at this breathing hour,
In every cell and every blooming bower
The sweetness of old lays is hovering still :
But the strong soul, the self-constraining will,
The rugged root that bare the winsome flower
Is weak and wither'd. Were we like the Fays
That sweetly nestle in the foxglove bells,
Or lurk and murmur in the rose-lipp'd shells
Which Neptune to the earth for quit-rent pays,
Then might our pretty modern Philomels
Sustain our spirits with their roundelays.

TO SHAKESPEARE

THE soul of man is larger than the sky,
Deeper than ocean or the abysmal dark
Of the unfathom'd centre. Like that Ark
Which in its sacred hold uplifted high,
O'er the drown'd hills, the human family,
And stock reserv'd of every living kind,
So, in the compass of the single mind,
The seeds and pregnant forms in essence lie,
That make all worlds. Great Poet, 't was thy art
To know thyself, and in thyself to be
Whate'er love, hate, ambition, destiny,
Or the firm, fatal purpose of the heart,
Can make of Man. Yet thou wert still the same,
Serene of thought, unhurt by thy own flame.

IDEALITY

THE vale of Tempe had in vain been fair,
Green Ida never deem'd the nurse of Jove ;
Each fabled stream, beneath its covert grove,
Had idly murmur'd to the idle air ;
The shaggy wolf had kept his horrid lair
In Delphi's cell, and old Trophonius' cave,
And the wild wailing of the Ionian wave
Had never blended with the sweet despair
Of Sappho's death-song : if the sight inspir'd
Saw only what the visual organs show,
If heaven-born phantasy no more requir'd
Than what within the sphere of sense may grow.
The beauty to perceive of earthly things,
The mounting soul must heavenward prune her wings.

SONG

SHE is not fair to outward view
As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
Until she smil'd on me ;
Oh! then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light.

But now her looks are coy and cold,
To mine they ne'er reply,
And yet I cease not to behold
The love-light in her eye :
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

PRAYER

BE not afraid to pray — to pray is right.
Pray, if thou canst, with hope; but ever pray,
Though hope be weak, or sick with long delay ;
Pray in the darkness, if there be no light.
Far is the time, remote from human sight,
When war and discord on the earth shall cease ;
Yet every prayer for universal peace
Avails the blessed time to expedite.
Whate'er is good to wish, ask that of Heaven,
Though it be what thou canst not hope to see :
Pray to be perfect, though material leaven
Forbid the spirit so on earth to be;
But if for any wish thou darest not pray,
Then pray to God to cast that wish away.

"MULTUM DILEXIT"

She sat and wept beside His feet; the weight
Of sin oppress'd her heart; for all the blame,
And the poor malice of the worldly shame,
To her was past, extinct, and out of date:
Only the sin remain'd, — the leprous state;
She would be melted by the heat of love,
By fires far fiercer than are blown to prove
And purge the silver ore adulterate.

She sat and wept, and with her untress'd hair
Still wip'd the feet she was so bless'd to touch;
And He wip'd off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she lov'd so much.
I am a sinner, full of doubts and fears:
Make me a humble thing of love and tears.

Anna Jameson

TAKE ME, MOTHER EARTH

Take me, Mother Earth, to thy cold breast,
And fold me there in everlasting rest!
The long day is o'er,
I 'm weary, I would sleep;
But deep, deep,
Never to waken more.

I have had joy and sorrow, I have prov'd
What life could give, have lov'd, and been belov'd;
I am sick, and heart-sore,
And weary; let me sleep;
But deep, deep,
Never to waken more.

To thy dark chamber, Mother Earth, I come,
Prepare thy dreamless bed in my last home;
Shut down the marble door,
And leave me! Let me sleep;
But deep, deep,
Never to waken more!

Chauncy Hare Townshend

THY JOY IN SORROW

Give me thy joy in sorrow, gracious Lord,
And sorrow's self shall like to joy appear!
Although the world should waver in its sphere
I tremble not if Thou thy peace afford;
But, Thou withdrawn, I am but as a chord
That vibrates to the pulse of hope and fear:
Nor rest I more than harps which to the air
Must answer when we place their tuneful board
Against the blast, which thrill unmeaning woe
Even in their sweetness. So no earthly wing
E'er sweeps me but to sadden. Oh, place Thou
My heart beyond the world's sad vibrating —
And where but in Thyself? Oh, circle me,
That I may feel no touches save of Thee.

John Henry Newman

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

Whene'er across this sinful flesh of mine
I draw the Holy Sign,
All good thoughts stir within me, and renew
Their slumbering strength divine;
Till there springs up a courage high and true
To suffer and to do.

And who shall say, but hateful spirits around,
For their brief hour unbound,
Shudder to see, and wail their overthrow?
While on far heathen ground
Some lonely Saint hails the fresh odor, though
Its source he cannot know.

ENGLAND

Tyre of the West, and glorying in the name
More than in Faith's pure fame!
O trust not crafty fort nor rock renown'd
Earn'd upon hostile ground;
Wielding Trade's master-keys, at thy proud will
To lock or loose its waters, England! trust not still.

Dread thine own power! Since haughty Babel's prime,
High towers have been man's crime.
Since her hoar age, when the huge moat lay bare,
Strongholds have been man's snare.
Thy nest is in the crags; ah, refuge frail!
Mad counsel in its hour, or traitors, will prevail.

He who scann'd Sodom for His righteous men
Still spares thee for thy ten;
But, should vain tongues the Bride of Heaven defy,
He will not pass thee by;
For, as earth's kings welcome their spotless guest,
So gives He them by turn, to suffer or be blest.

REVERSES

When mirth is full and free,
Some sudden gloom shall be;
When haughty power mounts high,
The Watcher's axe is nigh.
All growth has bound; when greatest found,
It hastes to die.

When the rich town, that long
Has lain its huts among,
Uprears its pageants vast,
And vaunts — it shall not last!
Bright tints that shine are but a sign
Of summer past.

And when thine eye surveys,
With fond adoring gaze,
And yearning heart, thy friend,
Love to its grave doth tend.
All gifts below, save Truth, but grow
Towards an end.

THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD

Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home —
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene, — one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor pray'd that Thou
Shouldst lead me on.
I lov'd to choose and see my path; but now
Lead Thou me on!
I lov'd the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride rul'd my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath bless'd me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have lov'd long since, and lost awhile.

THE ELEMENTS

(A TRAGIC CHORUS)

Man is permitted much
To scan and learn
In Nature's frame;
Till he well-nigh can tame
Brute mischiefs, and can touch
Invisible things, and turn
All warring ills to purposes of good.
Thus, as a god below,
He can control,
And harmonize, what seems amiss to flow
As sever'd from the whole
And dimly understood.

But o'er the elements
One Hand alone,
One Hand has sway.
What influence day by day
In straiter belt prevents
The impious Ocean, thrown
Alternate o'er the ever-sounding shore?
Or who has eye to trace
How the Plague came?
Forerun the doublings of the Tempest's race?
Or the Air's weight and flame
On a set scale explore?

Thus God has will'd
That man, when fully skill'd,
Still gropes in twilight dim;
Encompass'd all his hours
By fearfullest powers
Inflexible to him.
That so he may discern
His feebleness,
And e'en for earth's success
To Him in wisdom turn,
Who holds for us the keys of either home,
Earth and the world to come.

Sara Coleridge

FROM "PHANTASMION"

ONE FACE ALONE

One face alone, one face alone,
These eyes require;
But, when that long'd-for sight is shown,
What fatal fire
Shoots through my veins a keen and liquid flame,
That melts each fibre of my wasting frame!

One voice alone, one voice alone,
I pine to hear;
But, when its meek mellifluous tone
Usurps mine ear,
Those slavish chains about my soul are wound,
Which ne'er, till death itself, can be unbound.

One gentle hand, one gentle hand,
I fain would hold;
But, when it seems at my command,
My own grows cold;
Then low to earth I bend in sickly swoon,
Like lilies drooping 'mid the blaze of noon.

HE CAME UNLOOK'D FOR

He came unlook'd for, undesir'd,
A sunrise in the northern sky,
More than the brightest dawn admir'd,
To shine and then forever fly.

His love, conferr'd without a claim,
Perchance was like the fitful blaze,
Which lives to light a steadier flame,
And, while that strengthens, fast decays.

Glad fawn along the forest springing,
Gay birds that breeze-like stir the leaves,
Why hither haste, no message bringing,
To solace one that deeply grieves?

Thou star that dost the skies adorn,
So brightly heralding the day,
Bring one more welcome than the morn,
Or still in night's dark prison stay.

Charles Whitehead

AS YONDER LAMP

As yonder lamp in my vacated room
With arduous flame disputes the darksome night,
And can, with its involuntary light,
But lifeless things that near it stand, illume;
Yet all the while it doth itself consume;
And, ere the sun begin its heavenly height
With courier beams that meet the shepherd's sight,
There, whence its life arose, shall be its tomb:—

So wastes my life away. Perforce confin'd
To common things, a limit to its sphere,
It shines on worthless trifles undesign'd,
With fainter ray each hour imprison'd here.
Alas! to know that the consuming mind
Shall leave its lamp cold, ere the sun appear!

John Sterling

SHAKESPEARE

How little fades from earth when sink to rest
The hours and cares that mov'd a great man's breast!
Though naught of all we saw the grave may spare,
His life pervades the world's impregnate air;
Though Shakespeare's dust beneath our footsteps lies,
His spirit breathes amid his native skies;
With meaning won from him forever glows
Each air that England feels, and star it knows;
His whisper'd words from many a mother's voice
Can make her sleeping child in dreams rejoice,
And gleams from spheres he first conjoin'd to earth
Are blent with rays of each new morning's birth.
Amid the sights and tales of common things,
Leaf, flower, and bird, and wars, and deaths of kings,
Of shore, and sea, and nature's daily round,
Of life that tills, and tombs that load the ground,
His visions mingle, swell, command, pace by,
And haunt with living presence heart and eye;
And tones from him by other bosoms caught
Awaken flush and stir of mounting thought,
And the long sigh, and deep impassion'd thrill,
Rouse custom's trance, and spur the faltering will.
Above the goodly land more his than ours
He sits supreme enthron'd in skyey towers,
And sees the heroic brood of his creation
Teach larger life to his ennobled nation.
O shaping brain! O flashing fancy's hues!
O boundless heart kept fresh by pity's dews!
O wit humane and blithe! O sense sublime
For each dim oracle of mantled Time!
Transcendent Form of Man! in whom we read
Mankind's whole tale of Impulse, Thought, and Deed;
Amid the expanse of years beholding thee,
We know how vast our world of life may be;
Wherein, perchance, with aims as pure as thine,
Small tasks and strengths may be no less divine.

LOUIS XV

The King with all his kingly train
Had left his Pompadour behind,
And forth he rode in Senart's wood
The royal beasts of chase to find.
That day by chance the Monarch mused,
And turning suddenly away,
He struck alone into a path
That far from crowds and courtiers lay.

He saw the pale green shadows play
Upon the brown untrodden earth;
He saw the birds around him flit
As if he were of peasant birth;
He saw the trees that know no king
But him who bears a woodland axe;
He thought not, but he look'd about
Like one who skill in thinking lacks.

Then close to him a footstep fell,
And glad of human sound was he,
For truth to say he found himself
A weight from which he fain would flee.
But that which he would ne'er have guess'd
Before him now most plainly came;
The man upon his weary back
A coffin bore of rudest frame.

"Why, who art thou?" exclaim'd the King,
"And what is that I see thee bear?"
"I am a laborer in the wood,
And 't is a coffin for Pierre.

Close by the royal hunting-lodge
You may have often seen him toil ;
But he will never work again,
And I for him must dig the soil."

The laborer ne'er had seen the King,
And this he thought was but a man,
Who made at first a moment's pause,
And then anew his talk began :
"I think I do remember now, —
He had a dark and glancing eye,
And I have seen his slender arm
With wondrous blows the pick-axe ply.

"Pray tell me, friend, what accident
Can thus have kill'd our good Pierre ?"
"Oh! nothing more than usual, Sir,
He died of living upon air.
'T was hunger kill'd the poor good man,
Who long on empty hopes relied ;
He could not pay gabell and tax,
And feed his children, so he died."

The man stopp'd short, and then went on, —
"It is, you know, a common thing ;
Our children's bread is eaten up
By Courtiers, Mistresses, and King."
The King look'd hard upon the man,
And afterwards the coffin eyed,
Then spurr'd to ask of Pompadour,
How came it that the peasants died.

TO A CHILD

Dear child ! whom sleep can hardly tame,
As live and beautiful as flame,
Thou glancest round my graver hours
As if thy crown of wild-wood flowers
Were not by mortal forehead worn,
But on the summer breeze were borne,
Or on a mountain streamlet's waves
Came glistening down from dreamy caves.

With bright round cheek, amid whose glow
Delight and wonder come and go,
And eyes whose inward meanings play,
Congenial with the light of day,
And brow so calm, a home for Thought
Before he knows his dwelling wrought ;
Though wise indeed thou seemest not,
Thou brightenest well the wise man's lot.

That shout proclaims the undoubting mind,
That laughter leaves no ache behind ;
And in thy look and dance of glee,
Unforced, unthought of, simply free,
How weak the schoolman's formal art
Thy soul and body's bliss to part !
I hail thee Childhood's very Lord,
In gaze and glance, in voice and word.

In spite of all foreboding fear,
A thing thou art of present cheer ;
And thus to be belov'd and known
As is a rushy fountain's tone,
As is the forest's leafy shade,
Or blackbird's hidden serenade :
Thou art a flash that lights the whole ;
A gush from Nature's vernal soul.

And yet, dear Child ! within thee lives
A power that deeper feeling gives,
That makes thee more than light or air,
Than all things sweet and all things fair ;
And sweet and fair as aught may be,
Diviner life belongs to thee,
For 'mid thine aimless joys began
The perfect Heart and Will of Man.

Thus what thou art foreshows to me
How greater far thou soon shalt be ;
And while amid thy garlands blow
The winds that warbling come and go,
Ever within not loud but clear
Prophetic murmur fills the ear,
And says that every human birth
Anew discloses God to earth.

Jane Welsh Carlyle

TO A SWALLOW BUILDING UNDER OUR EAVES

Thou too hast travell'd, little fluttering thing —
Hast seen the world, and now thy weary wing
Thou too must rest.
But much, my little bird, couldst thou but tell,
I'd give to know why here thou lik'st so well
To build thy nest.

For thou hast pass'd fair places in thy flight;
A world lay all beneath thee where to light;
And, strange thy taste,
Of all the varied scenes that met thine eye,
Of all the spots for building 'neath the sky,
To choose this waste.

Did fortune try thee? was thy little purse
Perchance run low, and thou, afraid of worse,
Felt here secure?
Ah, no! thou need'st not gold, thou happy one!
Thou know'st it not. Of all God's creatures, man
Alone is poor.

What was it, then? some mystic turn of thought
Caught under German eaves, and hither brought,
Marring thine eye
For the world's loveliness, till thou art grown
A sober thing that dost but mope and moan,
Not knowing why?

Nay, if thy mind be sound, I need not ask,
Since here I see thee working at thy task
With wing and beak.
A well-laid scheme doth that small head contain,
At which thou work'st, brave bird, with might and main,
Nor more need'st seek.

In truth, I rather take it thou hast got
By instinct wise much sense about thy lot,
And hast small care
Whether an Eden or a desert be
Thy home, so thou remainst alive, and free
To skim the air.

God speed thee, pretty bird; may thy small nest
With little ones all in good time be blest.
I love thee much;
For well thou managest that life of thine,
While I! Oh, ask not what I do with mine!
Would I were such!

Richard Chenevix Trench

AFTER THE BATTLE

We crown'd the hard-won heights at length,
Baptiz'd in flame and fire;
We saw the foeman's sullen strength,
That grimly made retire—

Saw close at hand, then saw more far
Beneath the battle-smoke
The ridges of his shatter'd war,
That broke and ever broke.

But one, an English household's pride,
Dear many ways to me,
Who climb'd that death-path by my side,
I sought, but could not see.

Last seen, what time our foremost rank
That iron tempest tore;
He touch'd, he scal'd the rampart bank—
Seen then, and seen no more.

One friend to aid, I measur'd back
With him that pathway dread;
No fear to wander from our track—
Its waymarks English dead.

Light thicken'd: but our search was crown'd,
As we too well divin'd;
And after briefest quest we found
What we most fear'd to find.

His bosom with one death-shot riven,
The warrior-boy lay low;
His face was turn'd unto the heaven,
His feet unto the foe.

As he had fallen upon the plain,
Inviolate he lay;
No ruffian spoiler's hand profane
Had touch'd that noble clay.

And precious things he still retain'd,
Which, by one distant hearth,

Lov'd tokens of the lov'd, had gain'd
A worth beyond all worth.

I treasur'd these for them who yet
Knew not their mighty wo ;
I softly seal'd his eyes, and set
One kiss upon his brow.

A decent grave we scoop'd him, where
Less thickly lay the dead,
And decently compos'd him there
Within that narrow bed.

O theme for manhood's bitter tears :
The beauty and the bloom
Of less than twenty summer years
Shut in that darksome tomb !

Of soldier-sire the soldier-son ;
Life's honor'd eventide
One lives to close in England, one
In maiden battle died :

And they, that should have been the mourn'd,
The mourners' parts obtain :
Such thoughts were ours, as we return'd
To earth its earth again.

Brief words we read of faith and prayer
Beside that hasty grave;
Then turn'd away, and left him there,
The gentle and the brave :

I calling back with thankful heart,
With thoughts to peace allied,
Hours when we two had knelt apart
Upon the lone hillside ;

And, comforted, I prais'd the grace
Which him had led to be
An early seeker of that Face
Which he should early see.

SONNET

All beautiful things bring sadness, nor alone
Music, whereof that wisest poet spake ;
Because in us keen longings they awake
After the good for which we pine and groan,
From which exil'd we make continual moan,
Till once again we may our spirits slake
At those clear streams, which man did first forsake,
When he would dig for fountains of his own.
All beauty makes us sad, yet not in vain :
For who would be ungracious to refuse,
Or not to use, this sadness without pain,
Whether it flows upon us from the hues
Of sunset, from the time of stars and dews,
From the clear sky, or waters pure of stain ?

Thomas Miller

THE OLD BARON

High on a leaf-carv'd ancient oaken chair
The Norman Baron sat within his hall,
Wearied with a long chase by wold and mere ;
His hunting spear was rear'd against the wall ;
Upon the hearth-stone a large wood-fire blaz'd,
Crackled, or smok'd, or hiss'd, as the green boughs were rais'd.

Above an arch'd and iron-studded door,
The grim escutcheon's rude devices stood ;
On each side rear'd a black and gristly boar,
With hearts and daggers grav'd on grounds of blood,
And deep-dyed gules o'er which plum'd helmets frown;
Beneath this motto ran, — "Beware ! I trample down."

And high around were suits of armor placed,
And shields triangular, with the wild-boar's head ;
Arrows, and bows, and swords the rafters graced,
And red-deer's antlers their wide branches spread ;

A rough wolf's hide was nail'd upon the wall,
Its white teeth clench'd as when it in the dell did fall.

An angel-lamp from the carv'd ceiling hung;
Its outstretch'd wings the blazing oil contain'd,
While its long figure in the wide hall swung,
Blackening the roof to which its arms were chain'd;
The iron hair fell backward like a veil,
And through the gusty door it sent a weary wail.

The heavy arras flutter'd in the wind
That through the grated windows sweeping came,
And in its foldings glitter'd hart and hind,
While hawk, and horse, and hound, and kirtled dame,
Moved on the curtain'd waves, then sank in shade,
Just as the fitful wind along the arras played.

On the oak table, filled with blood-red wine,
A silver cup of quaint engraving stood,
On which a thin-limb'd stag of old design,
Chas'd by six long-ear'd dogs, made for a wood;
Sounding a horn a huntsman stood in view,
Whose swollen cheeks uprais'd the silver as he blew.

At the old Baron's feet a wolf-dog lay,
Watching his features with unflinching eye;
An aged minstrel, whose long locks were gray,
On an old harp his wither'd hands did try;
A crimson banner's rustling folds hung low,
And threw a rosy light upon his wrinkled brow.

John, Lord Hanmer

THE PINE WOODS

We stand upon the moorish mountain side,
From age to age, a solemn company;
There are no voices in our paths, but we
Hear the great whirlwinds roaring loud and wide;
And like the sea-waves have our boughs replied,
From the beginning, to their stormy glee;
The thunder rolls above us, and some tree
Smites with his bolt, yet doth the race abide,
Answering all times; but joyous, when the sun
Glints on the peaks that clouds no longer bear,
And the young shoots to flourish have begun,
And the quick seeds through the blue odorous air
From the expanding cones fall one by one;
And silence as in temples dwelleth there.

Lord Houghton

(RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES)

AN ENVOY TO AN AMERICAN LADY

Beyond the vague Atlantic deep,
Far as the farthest prairies sweep,
Where forest-glooms the nerve appal,
Where burns the radiant Western fall,
One duty lies on old and young, —
With filial piety to guard,
As on its greenest native sward,
The glory of the English tongue.
That ample speech! That subtle speech!
Apt for the need of all and each:
Strong to endure, yet prompt to bend
Wherever human feelings tend.

Preserve its force — expand its powers ;
And through the maze of civic life,
In Letters, Commerce, even in Strife,
Forget not it is yours and ours.

THE BROOK-SIDE

I WANDER'D by the brook-side,
I wander'd by the mill ;
I could not hear the brook flow,
The noisy wheel was still ;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
No chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree ;
I watch'd the long, long shade,
And, as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid ;
For I listen'd for a footfall,
I listen'd for a word,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

He came not, — no, he came not —
The night came on alone,
The little stars sat, one by one,
Each on his golden throne ;
The evening wind pass'd by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirr'd,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind ;
A hand was on my shoulder,
I knew its touch was kind :
It drew me nearer — nearer,
We did not speak one word,
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

Frances Anne Kemble

THE BLACK WALL-FLOWER

I FOUND a flower in a desolate plot,
Where no man wrought, — by a deserted cot,
Where no man dwelt ; a strange, dark-color'd gem,
Black heavy buds on a pale leafless stem.
I pluck'd it, wondering, and with it hied
To my brave May, and showing it I cried :
"Look, what a dismal flower ! did ever bloom,
Born of our earth and air, wear such a gloom ?
It looks as it should grow out of a tomb :
Is it not mournful ?" "No," replied the child ;
And, gazing on it thoughtfully, she smil'd.
She knows each word of that great book of God,
Spread out between the blue sky and the sod :
"There are no mournful flowers — they are all glad ;
This is a solemn one, but not a sad."
Lo ! with the dawn the black buds open'd slowly.
Within each cup a color deep and holy,
As sacrificial blood, glow'd rich and red,
And through the velvet tissue mantling spread ;
While in the midst of this dark crimson heat
A precious golden heart did throb and beat ;
Through ruby leaves the morning light did shine,
Each mournful bud had grown a flow'r divine ;
And bitter sweet to senses and to soul,
A breathing came from them, that fill'd the whole
Of the surrounding tranced and sunny air
With its strange fragrance, like a silent prayer.
Then cried I, "From the earth's whole wreath I 'll borrow
No flower but thee ! thou exquisite type of sorrow ! "

FAITH

Better trust all and be deceiv'd,
And weep that trust, and that deceiving,
Than doubt one heart that, if believ'd,
Had blessed one's life with true believing.

Oh, in this mocking world, too fast
The doubting fiend o'ertakes our youth!
Better be cheated to the last
Than lose the blessèd hope of truth.

Henry Alford

LADY MARY

Thou wert fair, Lady Mary,
As the lily in the sun:
And fairer yet thou mightest be,
Thy youth was but begun:
Thine eye was soft and glancing,
Of the deep bright blue;
And on the heart thy gentle words
Fell lighter than the dew.

They found thee, Lady Mary,
With thy palms upon thy breast,
Even as thou hadst been praying,
At thine hour of rest:
The cold pale moon was shining
On thy cold pale cheek;
And the morn of the Nativity
Had just begun to break.

They carv'd thee, Lady Mary,
All of pure white stone,
With thy palms upon thy breast,
In the chancel all alone:
And I saw thee when the winter moon
Shone on thy marble cheek,
When the morn of the Nativity
Had just begun to break.

But thou kneelest, Lady Mary,
With thy palms upon thy breast,
Among the perfect spirits,
In the land of rest:
Thou art even as they took thee
At thine hour of prayer,
Save the glory that is on thee
From the sun that shineth there.

We shall see thee, Lady Mary,
On that shore unknown,
A pure and happy angel
In the presence of the throne;
We shall see thee when the light divine
Plays freshly on thy cheek,
And the resurrection morning
Hath just begun to break.

COLONOS

Colonos! can it be that thou hast still
Thy laurel and thine olives and thy vine?
Do thy close-feather'd nightingales yet trill
Their warbles of thick-sobbing song divine?
Does the gold sheen of the crocus o'er thee shine
And dew-fed clusters of the daffodil,
And round thy flowery knots Cephisus twine,
Aye oozing up with many a bubbling rill?
Oh, might I stand beside thy leafy knoll,
In sight of the far-off city-towers, and see
The faithful-hearted pure Antigone
Toward the dread precinct, leading sad and slow
That awful temple of a kingly soul,
Lifted to heaven by unexampled woe!

John Mitford

THE ROMAN LEGIONS

Oh, aged Time! how far, and long,
Travell'd have thy pinions strong,
Since the masters of the world
Here their eagle-wings unfurl'd.
Onward as the legions pass'd,
Was heard the Roman trumpet's blast,
And see the mountain portals old
Now their opening gates unfold.

Slow moves the Consul's car between
Bright glittering helms and axes keen ;
O'er moonlit rocks, and ramparts bare,
High the Pretorian banners glare.
Afar is heard the torrent's moan,
The winds through rifted caverns groan ;
The vulture's huge primeval nest,
Wild toss'd the pine its shatter'd crest ;
Darker the blackening forest frown'd :
Strange murmurs shook the trembling ground.
In the old warrior's midnight dream
Gigantic shadows seem'd to gleam, —
The Caudine forks, and Cannæ's field
Again their threatening cohorts yield.
Seated on the Thunderer's throne,
He saw the shapes of gods unknown,
Saw in Olympus' golden hall
The volleyed lightning harmless fall,
The great and Capitolian lord
Dim sink, 'mid nameless forms abhorr'd.
Shook the Tarpeian cliff ; around
The trembling Augur felt the sound ;
Saw, God of Light ! in deathly shade,
Thy rich, resplendent tresses fade,
And from the empty car of day
The ethereal coursers bound away.

Then frequent rose the signal shrill,
Oft heard on Alba's echoing hill,
Or down the Apulian mountains borne,
The mingled swell of trump and horn ;
The stern centurion frown'd to hear
Unearthly voices murmuring near ;
Back to his still and Sabine home
Fond thoughts and favorite visions roam.
Sweet Vesta ! o'er the woods again
He views thy small and silent fane ;
He sees the whitening torrents leap
And flash round Tibur's mountain-steep ;
Sees Persian ensigns wide unroll'd,
Barbaric kings in chains of gold ;
O'er the long Appian's crowded street,
Sees trophied arms and eagles meet,
Through the tall arch their triumph pour,
Till rose the trumpet's louder roar ;
From a thousand voices nigh
Burst on his ear the banner-cry,
And o'er the concave rocks, the sound
"AVRELIVS," smote with stern rebound.

Arthur Henry Hallam

WRITTEN IN EDINBURGH

Even thus, methinks, a city rear'd should be,
Yea, an imperial city, that might hold
Five times an hundred noble towns in fee,
And either with their might of Babel old,
Or the rich Roman pomp of empery
Might stand compare, highest in arts enroll'd,
Highest in arms ; brave tenement for the free,
Who never crouch to thrones, or sin for gold.
Thus should her towers be rais'd — with vicinage
Of clear bold hills, that curve her very streets,
As if to vindicate, 'mid choicest seats
Of art, abiding Nature's majesty ;
And the broad sea beyond, in calm or rage
Chainless alike, and teaching Liberty.

Aubrey Thomas De Vere

AN EPICUREAN'S EPITAPH

When from my lips the last faint sigh is blown
By Death, dark waver of Lethean plumes,
O ! press not then with monumental stone
This forehead smooth, nor weigh me down with glooms
From green bowers, gray with dew,
Of Rosemary and Rue.
Choose for my bed some bath of sculptur'd marble
Wreath'd with gay nymphs ; and lay me — not alone —

Where sunbeams fall, flowers wave, and light birds warble,
To those who lov'd me murmuring in soft tone,
"Here lies our friend, from pain secure and cold;
And spreads his limbs in peace under the sun-warm'd mould!"

FLOWERS I WOULD BRING

Flowers I would bring if flowers could make thee fairer,
And music, if the Muse were dear to thee;
(For loving these would make thee love the bearer)
But sweetest songs forget their melody,
And loveliest flowers would but conceal the wearer: —
A rose I mark'd, and might have pluck'd; but she
Blush'd as she bent, imploring me to spare her,
Nor spoil her beauty by such rivalry.
Alas! and with what gifts shall I pursue thee,
What offerings bring, what treasures lay before thee;
When earth with all her floral train doth woo thee,
And all old poets and old songs adore thee;
And love to thee is naught; from passionate mood
Secur'd by joy's complacent plenitude!

HUMAN LIFE

Sad is our youth, for it is ever going,
Crumbling away beneath our very feet;
Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing,
In current unperceiv'd because so fleet;
Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing,
But tares, self-sown, have overtopp'd the wheat;
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing;
And still, O still, their dying breath is sweet:
And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
Of that which made our childhood sweeter still;
And sweet our life's decline, for it hath left us
A nearer Good to cure an older Ill:
And sweet are all things, when we learn to prize them
Not for their sake, but His who grants them or denies them.

SORROW

Count each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive him; rise and bow;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before him all thou hast. Allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate,
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

LOVE'S SPITE

You take a town you cannot keep;
And, forced in turn to fly,
O'er ruins you have made shall leap
Your deadliest enemy!
Her love is yours — and be it so —
But can you keep it? No, no, no!

Upon her brow we gaz'd with awe,
And lov'd, and wish'd to love, in vain;
But when the snow begins to thaw
We shun with scorn the miry plain.
Women with grace may yield: but she
Appear'd some Virgin Deity.

Bright was her soul as Dian's crest
Whitening on Vesta's fane its sheen:
Cold look'd she as the waveless breast
Of some stone Dian at thirteen.
Men lov'd: but hope they deem'd to be
A sweet Impossibility!

THE QUEEN'S VESPERS

HALF kneeling yet, and half reclining,
She held her harp against her knees:
Aloft the ruddy roofs were shining,
And sunset touch'd the trees.
From the gold border gleam'd like snow
Her foot: a crown enrich'd her brow:
Dark gems confin'd that crimson vest
Close-moulded on her neck and breast.

In silence lay the cloistral court
And shadows of the convent towers:
Well order'd now in stately sort
Those royal halls and bowers.
The choral chaunt had just swept by;
Bright arms lay quivering yet on high:
Thereon the warriors gaz'd, and then
Glanced lightly at the Queen again.

While from her lip the wild hymn floated,
Such grace in those uplifted eyes
And sweet, half absent looks, they noted
That, surely, through the skies
A Spirit, they deem'd, flew forward ever
Above that song's perpetual river,
And, smiling from its joyous track,
Upon her heavenly face look'd back.

CARDINAL MANNING

I LEARN'D his greatness first at Lavington:
The moon had early sought her bed of brine,
But we discours'd till now each starry sign
Had sunk: our theme was one and one alone:
"Two minds supreme," he said, "our earth has known;
One sang in science; one serv'd God in song;
Aquinas — Dante." Slowly in me grew strong
A thought, "These two great minds in him are one;
'Lord, what shall this man do?'" Later at Rome
Beside the dust of Peter and of Paul
Eight hundred mitred sires of Christendom
In Council sat. I mark'd him 'mid them all;
I thought of that long night in years gone by
And cried, "At last my question meets reply."

SONG

SEEK not the tree of silkiest bark
And balmiest bud,
To carve her name while yet 't is dark
Upon the wood!
The world is full of noble tasks
And wreaths hard won:
Each work demands strong hearts, strong hands,
Till day is done.

Sing not that violet-veined skin,
That cheek's pale roses,
The lily of that form wherein
Her soul reposes!
Forth to the fight, true man! true knight!
The clash of arms
Shall more prevail than whisper'd tale,
To win her charms.

The warrior for the True, the Right,
Fights in Love's name;
The love that lures thee from that fight
Lures thee to shame:
That love which lifts the heart, yet leaves
The spirit free, —
That love, or none, is fit for one
Man-shap'd like thee.

Thomas Burbidge

TO IMPERIA

THOU art not, and thou never canst be mine;
The die of fate for me is thrown,
And thou art made
No more to me than some resplendent shade
Flung on the canvas by old art divine;
Or vision of shap'd stone;
Or the far glory of some starry sign
Which hath a beauty unapproachable
To aught but sight, — a throne
High in the heavens and out of reach;
Therefore with this low speech

I bid thee now a long and last farewell
Ere I depart, in busy crowds to dwell,
Yet be alone.

All pleasures of this pleasant Earth be thine!
Yea, let her servants fondly press
Unto thy feet,
Bearing all sights most fair, all scents most sweet:
Spring, playing with her wreath of budded vine;
Summer, with stately tress
Prink'd with green wheat-ears and the white corn-bine;
And Autumn, crown'd from the yellow forest-tree;
— And Winter, in his dress
Begemm'd with icicles, from snow dead-white
Shooting their wondrous light;
These be thine ever. But I ask of thee
One blessing only to beseech for me, —
Forgetfulness.

IF I DESIRE

If I desire with pleasant songs
To throw a merry hour away,
Comes Love unto me, and my wrongs
In careful tale he doth display,
And asks me how I stand for singing
While I my helpless hands am wringing.

And then another time if I
A noon in shady bower would pass,
Comes he with stealthy gestures sly
And flinging down upon the grass,
Quoth he to me: My master dear,
Think of this noontide such a year!

And if elsewhere I lay my head
On pillow with intent to sleep,
Lies Love beside me on the bed,
And gives me ancient words to keep;
Says he: These looks, these tokens number,
May be, they 'll help you to a slumber.

So every time when I would yield
An hour to quiet, comes he still;
And hunts up every sign conceal'd
And every outward sign of ill;
And gives me his sad face's pleasures
For merriment's or sleep's or leisure's.

MOTHER'S LOVE

He sang so wildly, did the Boy,
That you could never tell
If 't was a madman's voice you heard,
Or if the spirit of a bird
Within his heart did dwell:
A bird that dallies with his voice
Among the matted branches;
Or on the free blue air his note
To pierce, and fall, and rise, and float,
With bolder utterance launches.
None ever was so sweet as he,
The boy that wildly sang to me;
Though toilsome was the way and long,
He led me not to lose the song.

But when again we stood below
The unhidden sky, his feet
Grew slacker, and his note more slow,
But more than doubly sweet.
He led me then a little way
Athwart the barren moor,
And then he stayed and bade me stay
Beside a cottage door;
I could have stayed of mine own will,
In truth, my eye and heart to fill
With the sweet sight which I saw there,
At the dwelling of the cottager.

A little in the doorway sitting,
The mother plied her busy knitting,
And her cheek so softly smil'd,
You might be sure, although her gaze
Was on the meshes of the lace,
Yet her thoughts were with her child.
But when the boy had heard her voice,
As o'er her work she did rejoice,
His became silent altogether,
And slily creeping by the wall,
He seiz'd a single plume, let fall
By some wild bird of longest feather;
And all a-tremble with his freak,
He touch'd her lightly on the cheek.

Oh, what a loveliness her eyes
Gather in that one moment's space,
While peeping round the post she spies
Her darling's laughing face!
Oh, mother's love is glorifying,
On the cheek like sunset lying;
In the eyes a moisten'd light,
Softer than the moon at night!

EVENTIDE

Comes something down with eventide
  Beside the sunset's golden bars,
Beside the floating scents, beside
  The twinkling shadows of the stars.

Upon the river's rippling face,
  Flash after flash the white
Broke up in many a shallow place ;
  The rest was soft and bright.

By chance my eye fell on the stream ;
  How many a marvellous power,
Sleeps in us, — sleeps, and doth not dream !
  This knew I in that hour.

For then my heart, so full of strife,
  No more was in me stirr'd ;
My life was in the river's life,
  And I nor saw nor heard.

I and the river, we were one :
  The shade beneath the bank,
I felt it cool ; the setting sun
  Into my spirit sank.

A rushing thing in power serene
  I was ; the mystery
I felt of having ever been
  And being still to be.

Was it a moment or an hour ?
  I knew not ; but I mourn'd
When from that realm of awful power
  I to these fields return'd.

William Henry Whitworth

TIME AND DEATH

I saw old Time, destroyer of mankind ;
Calm, stern, and cold he sate, and often shook
And turn'd his glass, nor ever car'd to look
How many of life's sands were still behind.
And there was Death, his page, aghast to find
How tremblingly, like aspens o'er a brook,
His blunted dart fell harmless ; so he took
His master's scythe, and idly smote the wind.
Smite on, thou gloomy one, with powerless aim !
For Sin, thy mother, at her dying breath
Wither'd that arm, and left thee but a name.
Hope clos'd the grave, when He of Nazareth,
Who led captivity His captive, came
And vanquish'd the great conquerors, Time and Death.

ENGLISH SONG WRITERS

(*See also :* B. W. Procter.)

John Kenyon

CHAMPAGNE ROSÉ

Lily on liquid roses floating —
  So floats yon foam o'er pink champagne :
Fain would I join such pleasant boating,
  And prove that ruby main,
    And float away on wine !

Those seas are dangerous, graybeards swear,
  Whose sea-beach is the goblet's brim ;
And true it is they drown old care —
  But what care we for him,
    So we but float on wine !

And true it is they cross in pain,
  Who sober cross the Stygian ferry ;
But only make our Styx champagne,
  And we shall cross right merry,
    Floating away in wine !

Old Charon's self shall make him mellow,
  Then gaily row his boat from shore ;
While we, and every jovial fellow,
  Hear, unconcern'd, the oar
    That dips itself in wine !

William Howitt

THE DEPARTURE OF THE SWALLOW

And is the swallow gone ?
    Who beheld it ?
    Which way sail'd it ?
  Farewell bade it none ?

No mortal saw it go :
    But who doth hear
    Its summer cheer
  As it flitteth to and fro ?

So the freed spirit flies !
    From its surrounding clay
    It steals away
  Like the swallow from the skies.

Whither ? wherefore doth it go ?
    'T is all unknown :
    We feel alone
  That a void is left below.

Thomas Haynes Bayly

SHE WORE A WREATH OF ROSES

She wore a wreath of roses
  The night that first we met ;
Her lovely face was smiling
  Beneath her curls of jet.
Her footstep had the lightness,
  Her voice the joyous tone, —
The tokens of a youthful heart,
  Where sorrow is unknown.
I saw her but a moment,
  Yet methinks I see her now,
With the wreath of summer flowers
  Upon her snowy brow.

A wreath of orange-blossoms,
  When next we met, she wore ;
The expression of her features
  Was more thoughtful than before ;
And standing by her side was one
  Who strove, and not in vain,
To soothe her, leaving that dear home
  She ne'er might view again.
I saw her but a moment,
  Yet methinks I see her now,
With the wreath of orange-blossoms
  Upon her snowy brow.

And once again I see that brow ;
  No bridal-wreath is there,
The widow's sombre cap conceals
  Her once luxuriant hair.
She weeps in silent solitude,
  And there is no one near
To press her hand within his own,
  And wipe away the tear.
I see her broken-hearted ;
  Yet methinks I see her now,
In the pride of youth and beauty,
  With a garland on her brow.

OH ! WHERE DO FAIRIES HIDE THEIR HEADS ?

Oh ! where do fairies hide their heads
  When snow lies on the hills,
When frost has spoil'd their mossy beds,
  And crystalliz'd their rills ?
Beneath the moon they cannot trip
  In circles o'er the plain ;
And draughts of dew they cannot sip
  Till green leaves come again.

Perhaps, in small, blue diving-bells,
They plunge beneath the waves,
Inhabiting the wreathed shells
That lie in coral caves ;
Perhaps, in red Vesuvius,
Carousals they maintain ;
And cheer their little spirits thus,
Till green leaves come again.

When they return there will be mirth,
And music in the air,
And fairy wings upon the earth,
And mischief everywhere.
The maids, to keep the elves aloof,
Will bar the doors in vain ;
No key-hole will be fairy-proof,
When green leaves come again.

Mary Howitt

THE SEA FOWLER

THE baron hath the landward park, the fisher hath the sea ;
But the rocky haunts of the sea-fowl belong alone to me.

The baron hunts the running deer, the fisher nets the brine ;
But every bird that builds a nest on ocean-cliffs is mine.

Come on then, Jock and Alick, let 's to the sea-rocks bold :
I was train'd to take the sea-fowl ere I was five years old.

The wild sea roars, and lashes the granite crags below,
And round the misty islets the loud, strong tempests blow.

And let them blow ! Roar wind and wave, they shall not me dismay ;
I 've faced the eagle in her nest and snatch'd her young away.

The eagle shall not build her nest, proud bird although she be,
Nor yet the strong-wing'd cormorant, without the leave of me.

The eider-duck has laid her eggs, the tern doth hatch her young,
And the merry gull screams o'er her brood ; but all to me belong.

Away, then, in the daylight, and back again ere eve ;
The eagle could not rear her young, unless I gave her leave.

The baron hath the landward park, the fisher hath the sea ;
But the rocky haunts of the sea-fowl belong alone to me.

CORNFIELDS

WHEN on the breath of autumn breeze,
From pastures dry and brown,
Goes floating like an idle thought
The fair white thistle-down,
Oh then what joy to walk at will
Upon the golden harvest hill !

What joy in dreamy ease to lie
Amid a field new shorn,
And see all round on sun-lit slopes
The pil'd-up stacks of corn ;
And send the fancy wandering o'er
All pleasant harvest-fields of yore.

I feel the day — I see the field,
The quivering of the leaves,
And good old Jacob and his house
Binding the yellow sheaves ;
And at this very hour I seem
To be with Joseph in his dream.

I see the fields of Bethlehem
And reapers many a one,
Bending unto their sickles' stroke,
And Boaz looking on ;
And Ruth, the Moabite so fair,
Among the gleaners stooping there.

Again I see a little child,
His mother's sole delight,
God's living gift of love unto
The kind good Shunammite ;
To mortal pangs I see him yield,
And the lad bear him from the field.

The sun-bath'd quiet of the hills,
  The fields of Galilee,
That eighteen hundred years ago
  Were full of corn, I see ;
And the dear Saviour takes his way
'Mid ripe ears on the Sabbath day.

Oh, golden fields of bending corn,
  How beautiful they seem !
The reaper-folk, the pil'd-up sheaves,
  To me are like a dream.
The sunshine and the very air
Seem of old time, and take me there.

Thomas Kibble Hervey

I THINK ON THEE

I THINK on thee in the night,
  When all beside is still,
And the moon comes out, with her pale, sad light,
  To sit on the lonely hill ;
When the stars are all like dreams,
  And the breezes all like sighs,
And there comes a voice from the far-off streams
  Like thy spirit's low replies.

I think on thee by day,
  'Mid the cold and busy crowd,
When the laughter of the young and gay
  Is far too glad and loud.
I hear thy soft, sad tone,
  And thy young, sweet smile I see :
My heart — my heart were all alone,
  But for its dreams of thee !

Of thee who wert so dear, —
  And yet I do not weep,
For thine eyes were stain'd by many a tear
  Before they went to sleep ;
And, if I haunt the past,
  Yet may I not repine
That thou hast won thy rest, at last,
  And all the grief is mine.

I think upon thy gain,
  Whate'er to me it cost,
And fancy dwells with less of pain
  On all that I have lost, —
Hope, like the cuckoo's oft-told tale,
  Alas, it wears her wing !
And love that, like the nightingale,
  Sings only in the spring.

Thou art my spirit's all,
  Just as thou wert in youth,
Still from thy grave no shadows fall
  Upon my lonely truth ;
A taper yet above thy tomb,
  Since lost its sweeter rays,
And what is memory, through the gloom,
  Was hope, in brighter days.

I am pining for the home
  Where sorrow sinks to sleep,
Where the weary and the weepers come,
  And they cease to toil and weep.
Why walk about with smiles
  That each should be a tear,
Vain as the summer's glowing spoils
  Flung o'er an early bier ?

Oh, like those fairy things,
  Those insects of the East,
That have their beauty in their wings,
  And shroud it while at rest ;
That fold their colors of the sky
  When earthward they alight,
And flash their splendors on the eye,
  Only to take their flight ; —

I never knew how dear thou wert,
  Till thou wert borne away !
I have it yet about my heart,
  The beauty of that day !
As if the robe thou wert to wear,
  Beyond the stars, were given
That I might learn to know it there,
  And seek thee out, in heaven !

Charles Swain

TRIPPING DOWN THE FIELD-PATH

Tripping down the field-path,
Early in the morn,
There I met my own love
'Midst the golden corn;
Autumn winds were blowing,
As in frolic chase,
All her silken ringlets
Backward from her face;
Little time for speaking
Had she, for the wind,
Bonnet, scarf, or ribbon,
Ever swept behind.

Still some sweet improvement
In her beauty shone;
Every graceful movement
Won me, — one by one!
As the breath of Venus
Seemed the breeze of morn,
Blowing thus between us,
'Midst the golden corn.
Little time for wooing
Had we, for the wind
Still kept on undoing
What we sought to bind.

Oh! that autumn morning
In my heart it beams,
Love's last look adorning
With its dream of dreams:
Still, like waters flowing
In the ocean shell,
Sounds of breezes blowing
In my spirit dwell;
Still I see the field-path; —
Would that I could see
Her whose graceful beauty
Lost is now to me!

TAKE THE WORLD AS IT IS

Take the world as it is! — there are good and bad in it,
And good and bad will be from now to the end;
And they, who expect to make saints in a minute,
Are in danger of marring more hearts than they 'll mend.

If ye wish to be happy ne'er seek for the faults,
Or you 're sure to find something or other amiss;
'Mid much that debases, and much that exalts,
The world 's not a bad one if left as it is.

Take the world as it is! — if the surface be shining,
Ne'er rake up the sediment hidden below!
There 's wisdom in this, but there 's none in repining
O'er things which can rarely be mended, we know.
There 's beauty around us, which let us enjoy;
And chide not, unless it may be with a kiss;
Though Earth 's not the Heaven we thought when a boy,
There 's something to live for, if ta'en as it is.

Take the world as it is! — with its smiles and its sorrow,
Its love and its friendship, — its falsehood and truth,
Its schemes that depend on the breath of to-morrow,
Its hopes which pass by like the dreams of our youth:
Yet, oh! whilst the light of affection may shine,
The heart in itself hath a fountain of bliss;
In the worst there 's some spark of a nature divine,
And the wisest and best take the world as it is.

LIFE

Life 's not our own, — 't is but a loan
To be repaid;
Soon the dark Comer 's at the door,
The debt is due: the dream is o'er, —
Life 's but a shade.

Thus all decline that bloom or shine,
Both star and flower;

'T is but a little odor shed,
A light gone out, a spirit fled,
A funeral hour.

Then let us show a tranquil brow
Whate'er befalls ;
That we upon life's latest brink
May look on Death's dark face, — and think
An angel calls.

THE ROSE THOU GAV'ST

THE rose thou gav'st at parting —
Hast thou forgot the hour ?
The moon was on the river,
The dew upon the flower :
Thy voice was full of tenderness,
But, ah ! thy voice misleads ;
The rose is like thy promises,
Its thorn is like thy deeds.

The winter cometh bleakly,
And dark the time must be ;
Bnt I can deem it summer
To what thou 'st prov'd to me.
The snow that meets the sunlight
Soon hastens from the scene ;
But melting snow is lasting,
To what thy faith hath been.

'T WAS JUST BEFORE THE HAY WAS MOWN

'T WAS just before the hay was mown,
The season had been wet and cold,
When my good dame began to groan,
And speak of days and years of old :
Ye were a young man then, and gay,
And raven black your handsome hair ;
Ah ! Time steals many a grace away,
And leaves us many a grief to bear.

Tush ! tush ! said I, we 've had our time,
And if 't were here again 't would go ;
The youngest cannot keep their prime,
The darkest head some gray must show.
We 've been together forty years,
And though it seem but like a day,
We 've much less cause, dear dame, for tears,
Than many who have trod life's way.

Goodman, said she, ye 're always right,
And 't is a pride to hear your tongue ;
And though your fine old head be white,
'T is dear to me as when 't were young.
So give your hand, — 't was never shown
But in affection unto me ;
And I shall be beneath the stone,
And lifeless, when I love not thee.

Eliza Cook

THE QUIET EYE

THE orb I like is not the one
That dazzles with its lightning gleam ;
That dares to look upon the sun,
As though it challenged brighter beam.
That orb may sparkle, flash, and roll ;
Its fire may blaze, its shaft may fly ;
But not for me : I prize the soul
That slumbers in a quiet eye.

There 's something in its placid shade
That tells of calm, unworldly thought ;
Hope may be crown'd, or joy delay'd —
No dimness steals, no ray is caught.
Its pensive language seems to say,
"I know that I must close and die ;"
And death itself, come when it may,
Can hardly change the quiet eye.

There 's meaning in its steady glance,
Of gentle blame or praising love,
That makes me tremble to advance
A word, that meaning might reprove.
The haughty threat, the fiery look,
My spirit proudly can defy,
But never yet could meet and brook
The upbraiding of a quiet eye.

There 's firmness in its even light,
That augurs of a breast sincere :
And, oh ! take watch how ye excite
That firmness till it yield a tear.
Some bosoms give an easy sigh,
Some drops of grief will freely start,
But that which sears the quiet eye
Hath its deep fountain in the heart.

THE SEA-CHILD

He crawls to the cliff and plays on a brink
Where every eye but his own would shrink ;
No music he hears but the billow's noise,
And shells and weeds are his only toys.
No lullaby can the mother find
To sing him to rest like the moaning wind ;
And the louder it wails and the fiercer it sweeps,
The deeper he breathes and the sounder he sleeps.

And now his wandering feet can reach
The rugged tracks of the desolate beach ;
Creeping about like a Triton imp,
To find the haunts of the crab and shrimp.
He clings, with none to guide or help,
To the furthest ridge of slippery kelp ;
And his bold heart glows while he stands and mocks
The seamew's cry on the jutting rocks.
Few years have wan'd — and now he stands
Bareheaded on the shelving sands.
A boat is moor'd, but his young hands cope
Right well with the twisted cable rope ;
He frees the craft, she kisses the tide ;
The boy has climb'd her beaten side :
She drifts — she floats — he shouts with glee ;
His soul hath claim'd its right on the sea.

'T is vain to tell him the howling breath
Rides over the waters with wreck and death :
He 'll say there 's more of fear and pain
On the plague-ridden earth than the storm-lash'd main.
'T would be as wise to spend thy power
In trying to lure the bee from the flower,
The lark from the sky, or the worm from the grave,
As in weaning the Sea-Child from the wave.

William Cox Bennett

BABY MAY

Cheeks as soft as July peaches,
Lips whose dewy scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness — round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise,
Minutes fill'd with shadeless gladness,
Minutes just as brimm'd with sadness,
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes,
Lights and shadows swifter born
Than on wind-swept Autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion
Making every limb all motion —
Catching up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers — straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kickings up and straining risings,
Mother's ever new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under,
Tiny scorns of smil'd reprovings
That have more of love than lovings,
Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness, that we prize such sinning,
Breakings dire of plates and glasses,
Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that 's able
To be caught from tray or table ;
Silences — small meditations,
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations,
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light by guessing ;
Slumbers — such sweet angel-seemings,
That we 'd ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we 'd always have thee waking ;
Wealth for which we know no measure,
Pleasure high above all pleasure,
Gladness brimming over gladness,
Joy in care — delight in sadness,
Loveliness beyond completeness,
Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
Beauty all that beauty may be —
That 's May Bennett, that 's my baby.

BE MINE, AND I WILL GIVE THY NAME

Be mine, and I will give thy name
  To Memory's care,
So well, that it shall breathe, with fame,
  Immortal air,
That time and change and death shall be
Scorn'd by the life I give to thee.

I will not, like the sculptor, trust
  Thy shape to stone ;
That, years shall crumble into dust,
  Its form unknown ;
No — the white statue's life shall be
Short, to the life I 'll give to thee.

Not to the canvas worms may fret
  Thy charms I 'll give ;
Soon shall the world those charms forget,
  If there they live ;
The life that colors lend shall be
Poor to the life I 'll give to thee.

For thou shalt live, defying time
  And mocking death,
In music on — O life sublime ! —
  A nation's breath ;
Love, in a people's songs, shall be
The eternal life I 'll give to thee.

A CHRISTMAS SONG

Blow, wind, blow,
Sing through yard and shroud ;
Pipe it shrilly and loud,
  Aloft as well as below ;
Sing in my sailor's ear
The song I sing to you,
"Come home, my sailor true,
For Christmas that comes so near."

Go, wind, go,
Hurry his home-bound sail,
Through gusts that are edged with hail,
  Through winter, and sleet, and snow ;
Song, in my sailor's ear,
Your shrilling and moans shall be,
For he knows they sing him to me
And Christmas that comes so near.

SONGS AND BALLADRY OF SCOTLAND

(*See also:* Aytoun, J. W. Carlyle, Macaulay, Nicoll, Scott)

Alexander Laing

MY AIN WIFE

I wadna gi'e my ain wife
  For ony wife I see ;
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
  For ony wife I see ;
A bonnier yet I 've never seen,
  A better canna be —
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
  For ony wife I see !

O couthie is my ingle-cheek,
  An' cheerie is my Jean ;
I never see her angry look,
  Nor hear her word on ane.
She 's gude wi' a' the neebours roun',
  An' aye gude wi' me —
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
  For ony wife I see.

An' O her looks sae kindlie,
  They melt my heart outright,
When o'er the baby at her breast
  She hangs wi' fond delight ;
She looks intill its bonnie face,
  An' syne looks to me —
I wadna gi'e my ain wife
  For ony wife I see.

Thomas Carlyle

THE SOWER'S SONG

Now hands to seed-sheet, boys!
We step and we cast; old Time's on wing;
And would ye partake of Harvest's joys,
The corn must be sown in spring.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Old earth is a pleasure to see
In sunshiny cloak of red and green;
The furrow lies fresh, this year will be
As years that are past have been.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Old earth, receive this corn,
The son of six thousand golden sires;
All these on thy kindly breast were born;
One more thy poor child requires.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Now steady and sure again,
And measure of stroke and step we keep;
Thus up and down we cast our grain;
Sow well and you gladly reap.
Fall gently and still, good corn,
Lie warm in thy earthy bed;
And stand so yellow some morn,
For beast and man must be fed.

Robert Gilfillan

'T IS SAIR TO DREAM

'T is sair to dream o' them we like,
That waking we sall never see;
Yet, oh! how kindly was the smile
My laddie in my sleep gave me!
I thought we sat beside the burn
That wimples down the flowery glen,
Where, in our early days o' love,
We met that ne'er sall meet again!

The simmer sun sank 'neath the wave,
And gladden'd, wi' his parting ray,
The woodland wild and valley green,
Fast fading into gloamin' grey.
He talk'd of days o' future joy,
And yet my heart was haflins sair,
For when his eye it beam'd on me,
A withering death-like glance was there!

I thought him dead, and then I thought
That life was young and love was free,
For o'er our heads the mavis sang,
And hameward hied the janty bee!

We pledged our love and plighted troth,
But cauld, cauld was the kiss he gave,
When starting from my dream, I found
His troth was plighted to the grave!

I canna weep, for hope is fled,
And nought would do but silent mourn,
Were 't no for dreams that should na come,
To whisper back my love's return;
'T is sair to dream o' them we like,
That waking we sall never see;
Yet, oh! how kindly was the smile
My laddie in my sleep gave me!

THE EXILE'S SONG

Oh! why left I my hame?
Why did I cross the deep?
Oh! why left I the land
Where my forefathers sleep?
I sigh for Scotia's shore,
And I gaze across the sea,
But I canna get a blink
O' my ain countrie.

The palm-tree waveth high,
  And fair the myrtle springs;
And, to the Indian maid,
  The bulbul sweetly sings.
But I dinna see the broom
  Wi' its tassels on the lee,
Nor hear the lintie's sang
  O' my ain countrie.

Oh ! here no Sabbath bell
  Awakes the Sabbath morn,
Nor song of reapers heard
  Amang the yellow corn :
For the tyrant's voice is here,
  And the wail of slaverie ;
But the sun of freedom shines
  In my ain countrie.

There 's a hope for every woe,
  And a balm for every pain,
But the first joys o' our heart
  Come never back again.
There 's a track upon the deep,
  And a path across the sea ;
But the weary ne'er return
  To their ain countrie.

David Macbeth Moir

CASA'S DIRGE

VAINLY for us the sunbeams shine,
  Dimm'd is our joyous hearth ;
O Casa, dearer dust than thine
  Ne'er mix'd with mother earth !
Thou wert the corner-stone of love,
  The keystone of our fate ;
Thou art not ! Heaven scowls dark above,
  And earth is desolate.

Ocean may rave with billows curl'd,
  And moons may wax and wane,
And fresh flowers blossom ; but this world
  Shall claim not thee again.
Clos'd are the eyes which bade rejoice
  Our hearts till love ran o'er ;
Thy smile is vanish'd, and thy voice
  Silent for evermore.

Yes ; thou art gone — our hearth's delight,
  Our boy so fond and dear ;
No more thy smiles to glad our sight,
  No more thy songs to cheer ;
No more thy presence, like the sun,
  To fill our home with joy :
Like lightning hath thy race been run,
  As bright as swift, fair boy.

Now winter with its snow departs,
  The green leaves clothe the tree ;
But summer smiles not on the hearts
  That bleed and break for thee :
The young May weaves her flowery crown,
  Her boughs in beauty wave ;
They only shake their blossoms down
  Upon thy silent grave.

Dear to our souls is every spot
  Where thy small feet have trod ;
There odors, breath'd from Eden, float,
  And sainted is the sod ;
The wild bee with its buglet fine,
  The blackbird singing free,
Melt both thy mother's heart and mine :
  They speak to us of thee !

Only in dreams thou comest now
  From Heaven's immortal shore,
A glory round that infant brow,
  Which Death's pale signet bore :
'T was thy fond looks, 't was thy fond lips,
  That lent our joys their tone ;
And life is shaded with eclipse,
  Since thou from earth art gone.

Thine were the fond, endearing ways,
  That tenderest feeling prove ;
A thousand wiles to win our praise,
  To claim and keep our love ;
Fondness for us thrill'd all thy veins ;
  And, Casa, can it be
That nought of all the past remains
  Except vain tears for thee ?

Idly we watch thy form to trace
  In children on the street ;
Vainly, in each familiar place,
  We list thy pattering feet ;
Then, sudden, o'er these fancies crush'd,
  Despair's black pinions wave ;
We know that sound for ever hush'd :
  We look upon thy grave.

O heavenly child of mortal birth!
  Our thoughts of thee arise,
Not as a denizen of earth,
  But inmate of the skies:
To feel that life renew'd is thine
  A soothing balm imparts;
We quaff from out Faith's cup divine,
  And Sabbath fills our hearts.

Thou leanest where the fadeless wands
  Of amaranth bend o'er;
Thy white wings brush the golden sands
  Of Heaven's refulgent shore.
Thy home is where the psalm and song
  Of angels choir abroad,
And blessed spirits, all day long,
  Bask round the throne of God.

There chance and change are not; the soul
  Quaffs bliss as from a sea,
And years, through endless ages, roll,
  From sin and sorrow free:
There gush for aye fresh founts of joy,
  New raptures to impart;
Oh! dare we call thee still *our* boy,
  Who now a seraph art?

A little while — a little while —
  Ah! long it cannot be!
And thou again on us wilt smile,
  Where angels smile on thee.
How selfish is the worldly heart:
  How sinful to deplore!
Oh! that we were where now thou art,
  Not lost, but gone before.

William Thom

THE MITHERLESS BAIRN

When a' ither bairnies are hush'd to their hame,
By aunty, or cousin, or frecky grand-dame,
Wha stands last an' lanely, an' sairly forfairn?
'T is the puir dowie laddie — the mitherless bairn!

The mitherless bairnie creeps to his lane bed;
Nane covers his cauld back, or haps his bare head;
His wee hackit heelies are hard as the airn,
An' lithless the lair o' the mitherless bairn.

Aneath his cauld brow, siccan dreams hover there,
O' hands that wont kindly to kaim his dark hair!
But mornin' brings clutches, a' reckless an' stern,
That lo'e na the locks o' the mitherless bairn.

The sister, wha sang o'er his saftly rock'd bed,
Now rests in the mools whare their mammie is laid;
While the father toils sair his wee bannock to earn,
An' kens na the wrangs o' his mitherless bairn.

Her spirit that pass'd in yon hour of his birth
Still watches his lone lorn wand'rings on earth,
Recording in heaven the blessings they earn
Wha couthilie deal wi' the mitherless bairn!

Oh! speak him na harshly — he trembles the while,
He bends to your biddin', and blesses your smile:
In the dark hour o' anguish, the heartless shall learn
That God deals the blow for the mitherless bairn!

Thomas Aird

THE SWALLOW

THE swallow, bonny birdie, comes sharp twittering o'er the sea,
And gladly is her carol heard for the sunny days to be ;
She shares not with us wintry glooms, but yet, no faithless thing,
She hunts the summer o'er the earth with wearied little wing.

The lambs like snow all nibbling go upon the ferny hills ;
Light winds are in the leafy woods, and birds, and bubbling rills ;
Then welcome, little swallow, by our morning lattice heard,
Because thou com'st when Nature bids bright days be thy reward !

Thine be sweet mornings with the bee that 's out for honey-dew ;
And glowing be the noontide for the grasshopper and you ;
And mellow shine, o'er day's decline, the sun to light thee home :
What can molest thy airy nest ? sleep till the day-spring come !

The river blue that rushes through the valley hears thee sing,
And murmurs much beneath the touch of thy light-dipping wing.
The thunder-cloud, over us bowed, in deeper gloom is seen,
When quick reliev'd it glances to thy bosom's silvery sheen.

The silent Power, that brought thee back with leading-strings of love
To haunts where first the summer sun fell on thee from above,
Shall bind thee more to come aye to the music of our leaves,
For here thy young, where thou hast sprung, shall glad thee in our eaves.

Hugh Miller

THE BABIE

NAE shoon to hide her tiny taes,
Nae stockings on her feet ;
Her supple ankles white as snow
Of early blossoms sweet.

Her simple dress of sprinkled pink,
Her double, dimpled chin ;
Her pucker'd lip and bonny mou',
With nae ane tooth between.

Her een sae like her mither's een,
Twa gentle, liquid things ;
Her face is like an angel's face —
We 're glad she has nae wings.

James Ballantine

MUCKLE-MOU'D MEG

"OH, wha hae ye brought us hame now, my brave lord,
Strappit flaught ower his braid saddle-bow ?
Some bauld Border reiver to feast at our board,
An' herry our pantry, I trow.
He 's buirdly an' stalwart in lith an' in limb ;
Gin ye were his master in war
The field was a saft eneugh litter for him,
Ye needna hae brought him sae far.

Then saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
An' when ye gae hunt again, strike higher game."

"Hoot, whisht ye, my dame, for he comes o' gude kin,
An' boasts o' a lang pedigree;
This night he maun share o' our gude cheer within,
At morning's grey dawn he maun dee.
He's gallant Wat Scott, heir o' proud Harden Ha',
Wha ettled our lands clear to sweep;
But now he is snug in auld Elibank's paw,
An' shall swing frae our donjon-keep.
Tho' saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
I'll ne'er when I hunt again strike higher game."

"Is this young Wat Scott? an' wad ye rax his craig,
When our daughter is fey for a man?
Gae, gaur the loun marry our muckle-mou'd Meg,
Or we 'll ne'er get the jaud aff our han'!"
"Od! hear our gudewife, she wad fain save your life;
Wat Scott, will ye marry or hang?"
But Meg's muckle mou set young Wat's heart agrue,
Wha swore to the woodie he 'd gang.
Ne'er saddle nor munt again, harness nor dunt again,
Wat ne'er shall hunt again, ne'er see his hame.

Syne muckle-mou'd Meg press'd in close to his side,
An' blinkit fu' sleely and kind,
But aye as Wat glower'd at his braw proffer'd bride,
He shook like a leaf in the wind.
"A bride or a gallows, a rope or a wife!"
The morning dawn'd sunny and clear —
Wat boldly strode forward to part wi' his life,
Till he saw Meggy shedding a tear;
Then saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
Fain wad Wat hunt again, fain wad be hame.

Meg's tear touch'd his bosom, the gibbet frown'd high,
An' slowly Wat strode to his doom;
He gae a glance round wi' a tear in his eye,
Meg shone like a star through the gloom.
She rush'd to his arms, they were wed on the spot,
An' lo'ed ither muckle and lang;
Nae bauld border laird had a wife like Wat Scott;
'T was better to marry than hang.
So saddle an' munt again, harness an' dunt again,
Elibank hunt again, Wat 's snug at hame.

(*Compare* R. BROWNING, *p. 364.*)

John Stuart Blackie

MY BATH

(*Scene* — Kinnaird Burn, near Pitlochrie.)

COME here, good people great and small, that wander far abroad,
To drink of drumly German wells, and make a weary road
To Baden and to Wiesbaden, and how they all are nam'd,
To Carlsbad and to Kissingen, for healing virtue fam'd;
Come stay at home, and keep your feet from dusty travel free,
And I will show you what rare bath a good God gave to me;
'T is hid among the Highland hills beneath the purple brae,
With cooling freshness free to all, nor doctor's fee to pay.

No craft of mason made it here, nor carpenter, I wot;
Nor tinkering fool with hammering tool to shape the charmed spot;
But down the rocky-breasted glen the foamy torrent falls
Into the amber caldron deep, fenced round with granite walls.

Nor gilded beam, nor pictur'd dome, nor curtain, roofs it in,
But the blue sky rests, and white clouds float, above the bubbling linn,
Where God's own hand hath scoop'd it out in Nature's Titan hall,
And from her cloud-fed fountains drew its waters free to all.

Oh come and see my Highland bath, and prove its freshening flood,
And spare to taint your skin with swathes of drumly German mud :
Come plunge with me into the wave like liquid topaz fair,
And to the waters give your back that spout down bravely there ;
Then float upon the swirling flood, and, like a glancing trout,
Plash about, and dash about, and make a lively rout,
And to the gracious sun display the glory of your skin,
As you dash about and splash about in the foamy-bubbling linn.

Oh come and prove my bonnie bath ; in sooth 't is furnish'd well
With trees, and shrubs, and spreading ferns, all in the rocky dell,
And roses hanging from the cliff in grace of white and red,
And little tiny birches nodding lightly overhead,
And spiry larch with purple cones, and tips of virgin green,
And leafy shade of hazel copse with sunny glints between :
Oh might the Roman wight be here who praised Bandusia's well,
He 'd find a bath to Nymphs more dear in my sweet Highland dell.

Some folks will pile proud palaces, and some will wander far
To scan the blinding of a sun, or the blinking of a star ;
Some sweat through Afric's burning sands ; and some will vex their soul
To find heaven knows what frosty prize beneath the Arctic pole.
God bless them all ; and may they find what thing delights them well
In east or west, or north or south, — but I at home will dwell
Where fragrant ferns their fronds uncurl, and healthful breezes play,
And clear brown waters grandly swirl beneath the purple brae.

Oh come and prove my Highland bath, the burn, and all the glen,
Hard-toiling wights in dingy nooks, and scribes with inky pen,
Strange thoughtful men with curious quests that vex your fretful brains,
And scheming sons of trade who fear to count your slippery gains ;
Come wander up the burn with me, and thread the winding glen,
And breathe the healthful power that flows down from the breezy Ben,
And plunge you in the deep brown pool ; and from beneath the spray
You'll come forth like a flower that blooms 'neath freshening showers in May !

THE EMIGRANT LASSIE

As I came wandering down Glen Spean,
Where the braes are green and grassy,
With my light step I overtook
A weary-footed lassie.

She had one bundle on her back,
Another in her hand,
And she walk'd as one who was full loath
To travel from the land.

Quoth I, "My bonnie lass!" — for she
Had hair of flowing gold,
And dark brown eyes, and dainty limbs,
Right pleasant to behold —

"My bonnie lass, what aileth thee,
On this bright summer day,
To travel sad and shoeless thus
Upon the stony way ?

"I 'm fresh and strong, and stoutly shod,
And thou art burden'd so ;
March lightly now, and let me bear
The bundles as we go."

"No, no!" she said, "that may not be ;
What 's mine is mine to bear ;
Of good or ill, as God may will,
I take my portion'd share."

"But you have two, and I have none ;
One burden give to me ;
I 'll take that bundle from thy back
That heavier seems to be."

"No, no !" she said ; "*this*, if you will,
That holds — no hand but mine
May bear its weight from dear Glen Spean
'Cross the Atlantic brine !"

"Well, well ! but tell me what may be
Within that precious load,
Which thou dost bear with such fine care
Along the dusty road ?

"Belike it is some present rare
From friend in parting hour ;
Perhaps, as prudent maidens wont,
Thou tak'st with thee thy dower."

She droop'd her head, and with her hand
She gave a mournful wave :
"Oh, do not jest, dear sir ! — it is
Turf from my mother's grave !"

I spoke no word : we sat and wept
By the road-side together ;
No purer dew on that bright day
Was dropp'd upon the heather.

THE WORKING MAN'S SONG

I AM no gentleman, not I !
No bowing, scraping thing !
I bear my head more free and high
Than titled count or king.
I am no gentleman, not I !
No, no, no !
And only to one Lord on high
My head I bow.

I am no gentleman, not I !
No vain and varnish'd thing !
And from my heart, without a die,
My honest thoughts I fling.
I am no gentleman, not I !
No, no, no !
Our stout John Knox was none — and why
Should I be so ?

I am no gentleman, not I !
No mincing, modish thing,
In gay saloon a butterfly,
Some wax-doll Miss to wing.
I am no gentleman, not I !
No, no, no !
No moth, to sport in fashion's eye,
A Bond Street beau.

I am no gentleman, not I !
No bully, braggart thing,
With jockeys on the course to vie,
With bull-dogs in the ring.
I am no gentleman, not I !
No, no, no !
The working man might sooner die
Than sink so low.

I am no gentleman, not I !
No star-bedizen'd thing !
My fathers filch'd no dignity,
By fawning to a king.
I am no gentleman, not I !
No, no, no !
And to the wage of honesty
My rank I owe.

I am no gentleman, not I !
No bowing, scraping thing !
I bear my head more free and high
Than titled count or king.
I am no gentleman, not I !
No, no, no !
And thank the blessed God on high,
Who made me so !

William Miller

WILLIE WINKIE

WEE Willie Winkie rins through the town,
Up stairs and doon stairs, in his nicht-gown,
Tirlin' at the window, cryin' at the lock,
"Are the weans in their bed ? — for it 's
now ten o'clock."

Hey, Willie Winkie ! are ye comin' ben ?
The cat 's singin' gay thrums to the sleepin'
hen,
The doug 's spelder'd on the floor, and disna
gie a cheep ;
But here 's a waukrife laddie, that winna
fa' asleep.

Ony thing but sleep, ye rogue! — glow'rin' like the moon,
Rattlin' in an airn jug wi' an airn spoon,
Rumblin', tumblin' roun' about, crawin' like a cock,
Skirlin' like a kenna-what — wauknin' sleepin' folk!
Hey, Willie Winkie! the wean 's in a creel!
Waumblin' aff a bodie's knee like a vera eel,
Ruggin' at the cat's lug, and ravellin' a' her thrums:
Hey, Willie Winkie! — See, there he comes!

Charles Mackay

TELL ME, YE WINGED WINDS

Tell me, ye winged winds,
That round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know some spot
Where mortals weep no more?
Some lone and pleasant dell,
Some valley in the west,
Where, free from toil and pain,
The weary soul may rest?
The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
And sigh'd for pity as it answer'd, "No."

Tell me, thou mighty deep,
Whose billows round me play,
Knowst thou some favor'd spot,
Some island far away,
Where weary man may find
The bliss for which he sighs,
Where sorrow never lives,
And friendship never dies?
The loud waves, rolling in perpetual flow,
Stopp'd for a while, and sigh'd to answer,
"No."

And thou, serenest moon,
That, with such lovely face,
Dost look upon the earth
Asleep in night's embrace;
Tell me, in all thy round
Hast thou not seen some spot
Where miserable man
May find a happier lot?
Behind a cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
And a voice, sweet but sad, responded,
"No."

Tell me, my secret soul,
Oh! tell me, Hope and Faith,
Is there no resting-place
From sorrow, sin, and death?
Is there no happy spot
Where mortals may be blest,
Where grief may find a balm,
And weariness a rest?
Faith, Hope, and Love, best boons to mortals given,
Wav'd their bright wings, and whisper'd,
"Yes, in heaven."

EARL NORMAN AND JOHN TRUMAN

Through great Earl Norman's acres wide,
A prosperous and a good land,
'T will take you fifty miles to ride
O'er grass, and corn, and woodland.
His age is sixty-nine, or near,
And I 'm scarce twenty-two, man,
And have but fifty pounds a year, —
Poor John Truman!
But would I change? I' faith! not I,
Oh no! not I, says Truman!

Earl Norman dwells in halls of state,
The grandest in the county;
Has forty cousins at his gate,
To feed upon his bounty.
But then he 's deaf — the doctors' care,
While I in whispers woo, man,
And find my physic in the air, —
Stout John Truman!
D 'ye think I 'd change for thrice his gold?
Oh no! not I, says Truman!

Earl Norman boasts a gartered knee,
A proof of royal graces;
I wear, by Nelly wrought for me,
A silken pair of braces.
He sports a star upon his breast,
And I a violet blue, man, —

The gift of her who loves me best,
Proud John Truman !
I 'd be myself, and not the Earl,
Oh, that would I, says Truman.

WHAT MIGHT BE DONE

WHAT might be done if men were wise —
What glorious deeds, my suffering brother,
Would they unite
In love and right,
And cease their scorn of one another ?

Oppression's heart might be imbued
With kindling drops of loving-kindness,
And knowledge pour,
From shore to shore,
Light on the eyes of mental blindness.

All slavery, warfare, lies, and wrongs,
All vice and crime, might die together ;
And wine and corn,
To each man born,
Be free as warmth in summer weather.

The meanest wretch that ever trod,
The deepest sunk in guilt and sorrow,
Might stand erect
In self-respect,
And share the teeming world to-morrow.

What might be done ? This might be done,
And more than this, my suffering brother —
More than the tongue
E'er said or sung,
If men were wise and lov'd each other.

IRISH MINSTRELSY

INCLUDING THE POETS OF YOUNG IRELAND

(*See also :* DE VERE, MAGINN, MAHONY, SIMMONS)

Samuel Lover

RORY O'MORE; OR, GOOD OMENS

YOUNG Rory O'More courted Kathleen Bawn,
He was bold as a hawk, — she as soft as the dawn ;
He wish'd in his heart pretty Kathleen to please,
And he thought the best way to do that was to tease.
"Now, Rory, be aisy," sweet Kathleen would cry
(Reproof on her lip, but a smile in her eye),
"With your tricks I don't know, in troth, what I 'm about,
Faith you 've teas'd till I've put on my cloak inside out."
"Oh ! jewel," says Rory, "that same is the way
You 've thrated my heart for this many a day ;
And 't is plaz'd that I am, and why not to be sure ?
For 't is all for good luck," says bold Rory O'More.

"Indeed, then," says Kathleen, "don't think of the like,
For I half gave a promise to soothering Mike ;
The ground that I walk on he loves, I 'll be bound."
"Faith," says Rory, "I 'd rather love you than the ground."
"Now, Rory, I 'll cry if you don't let me go ;
Sure I drame ev'ry night that I 'm hating you so ! "
"Oh," says Rory, "that same I 'm delighted to hear,
For drames always go by conthrairies, my dear ;

Oh! jewel, keep draming that same till
you die,
And bright morning will give dirty night
the black lie!
And 't is plaz'd that I am, and why not, to
be sure?
Since 't is all for good luck," says bold
Rory O'More.

"Arrah, Kathleen, my darlint, you've
teas'd me enough,
Sure I've thrash'd for your sake Dinny
Grimes and Jim Duff;
And I've made myself, drinking your
health, quite a baste,
So I think, after that, I may talk to the
praste."
Then Rory, the rogue, stole his arm round
her neck,
So soft and so white, without freckle or
speck,
And he look'd in her eyes that were beaming with light,
And he kiss'd her sweet lips; — don't you
think he was right?
"Now Rory, leave off, sir; you'll hug me
no more,
That's eight times to-day you have kiss'd
me before."
"Then here goes another," says he, "to
make sure,
For there's luck in odd numbers," says
Rory O'More.

WIDOW MACHREE

Widow Machree, it's no wonder you frown,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
Faith, it ruins your looks, that same dirty
black gown,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
How alter'd your air,
With that close cap you wear —
'T is destroying your hair
Which should be flowing free;
Be no longer a churl
Of its black silken curl,
Och hone! Widow Machree!

Widow Machree, now the summer is come,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
When everything smiles, should a beauty
look glum?
Och hone! Widow Machree.
See the birds go in pairs,
And the rabbits and hares —
Why even the bears
Now in couples agree;
And the mute little fish,
Though they can't spake, they wish,
Och hone! Widow Machree.

Widow Machree, and when winter comes
in,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
To be poking the fire all alone is a sin,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
Sure the shovel and tongs
To each other belongs,
And the kettle sings songs
Full of family glee;
While alone with your cup,
Like a hermit, you sup,
Och hone! Widow Machree.

And how do you know, with the comforts
I've towld,
Och hone! Widow Machree,
But you're keeping some poor fellow out in
the cowld?
Och hone! Widow Machree.
With such sins on your head
Sure your peace would be fled,
Could you sleep in your bed
Without thinking to see
Some ghost or some sprite,
That would wake you each night,
Crying, "Och hone! Widow Machree"?

Then take my advice, darling Widow Machree,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
And with my advice, faith I wish you'd
take me,
Och hone! Widow Machree.
You'd have me to desire
Then to sit by the fire,
And sure Hope is no liar
In whispering to me,
That the ghosts would depart,
When you'd me near your heart,
Och hone! Widow Machree.

John Banim

SOGGARTH AROON

Am I the slave they say,
Soggarth aroon?[1]
Since you did show the way,
Soggarth aroon,
Their slave no more to be,
While they would work with me
Old Ireland's slavery,
Soggarth aroon.

Why not her poorest man,
Soggarth aroon,
Try and do all he can,
Soggarth aroon,
Her commands to fulfil
Of his own heart and will,
Side by side with you still,
Soggarth aroon?

Loyal and brave to you,
Soggarth aroon,
Yet be not slave to you,
Soggarth aroon,
Nor, out of fear to you,
Stand up so near to you —
Och! out of fear to *you*,
Soggarth aroon!

Who, in the winter's night,
Soggarth aroon,
When the cold blast did bite,
Soggarth aroon,
Came to my cabin-door,
And on my earthen-floor
Knelt by me, sick and poor,
Soggarth aroon?

Who, on the marriage day,
Soggarth aroon,
Made the poor cabin gay,
Soggarth aroon,
And did both laugh and sing,
Making our hearts to ring
At the poor christening,
Soggarth aroon?

Who, as friend only met,
Soggarth aroon,
Never did flout me yet,
Soggarth aroon;
And when my hearth was dim,
Gave, while his eye did brim,
What I should give to him,
Soggarth aroon?

Och! you, and only you,
Soggarth aroon!
And for this I was true to you,
Soggarth aroon!
Our love they 'll never shake,
When for ould Ireland's sake
We a true part did take,
Soggarth aroon!

Gerald Griffin

A PLACE IN THY MEMORY

A place in thy memory, Dearest!
Is all that I claim:
To pause and look back when thou hearest
The sound of my name.
Another may woo thee, nearer;
Another may win and wear;
I care not though he be dearer,
If I am remember'd there.

Remember me, not as a lover
Whose hope was cross'd,
Whose bosom can never recover
The light it hath lost!
As the young bride remembers the mother
She loves, though she never may see,
As a sister remembers a brother,
O Dearest, remember me!

Could I be thy true lover, Dearest!
Couldst thou smile on me,

[1] *Ságart arún* — Priest, dear.

I would be the fondest and dearest
  That ever lov'd thee :
But a cloud on my pathway is glooming
  That never must burst upon thine ;
And heaven, that made thee all blooming,
  Ne'er made thee to wither on mine.

Remember me then ! O remember
  My calm light love,
Though bleak as the blasts of November
  My life may prove !
That life will, though lonely, be sweet
  If its brightest enjoyment should be
A smile and kind word when we meet
  And a place in thy memory.

NOCTURNE

Sleep that like the couched dove
  Broods o'er the weary eye,
Dreams that with soft heavings move
  The heart of memory,
Labor's guerdon, golden rest,
Wrap thee in its downy vest, —
Fall like comfort on thy brain
And sing the hush song to thy pain !

Far from thee be startling fears,
  And dreams the guilty dream ;
No banshee scare thy drowsy ears
  With her ill-omen'd scream ;
But tones of fairy minstrelsy
Float like the ghosts of sound o'er thee,
Soft as the chapel's distant bell,
And lull thee to a sweet farewell.

Ye for whom the ashy hearth
  The fearful housewife clears,
Ye whose tiny sounds of mirth
  The nighted carman hears,
Ye whose pygmy hammers make
The wonderers of the cottage wake,
Noiseless be your airy flight,
Silent as the still moonlight.

Silent go, and harmless come,
  Fairies of the stream :
Ye, who love the winter gloom
  Or the gay moonbeam,
Hither bring your drowsy store
Gather'd from the bright lusmore ;
Shake o'er temples, soft and deep,
The comfort of the poor man, sleep.

James Clarence Mangan

DARK ROSALEEN

O my Dark Rosaleen,
  Do not sigh, do not weep !
The priests are on the ocean green,
  They march along the deep.
There 's wine from the royal Pope,
  Upon the ocean green ;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My own Rosaleen !
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health, and help, and hope,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

Over hills, and through dales,
  Have I roam'd for your sake ;
All yesterday I sail'd with sails
  On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
  I dash'd across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My own Rosaleen !
O ! there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lighten'd through my blood,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

All day long, in unrest,
  To and fro, do I move,
The very soul within my breast
  Is wasted for you, love !
The heart in my bosom faints
  To think of you, my queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My own Rosaleen !
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
  Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
  Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
  Again in golden sheen ;
'T is you shall reign, shall reign alone,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My own Rosaleen !
'T is you shall have the golden throne,
'T is you shall reign, and reign alone,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

Over dews, over sands,
  Will I fly for your weal :
Your holy, delicate white hands
  Shall girdle me with steel.
At home in your emerald bowers,
  From morning's dawn till e'en,
You 'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My fond Rosaleen !
You 'll think of me through daylight's hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

I could scale the blue air,
  I could plough the high hills,
O, I could kneel all night in prayer,
  To heal your many ills !
And one beamy smile from you
  Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My fond Rosaleen !
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

O ! the Erne shall run red
  With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
  And flames warp hill and wood,
And gun-peal and slogan cry
  Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
  My Dark Rosaleen !
  My own Rosaleen !
The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
  My Dark Rosaleen !

SOUL AND COUNTRY

Arise, my slumbering soul ! arise,
And learn what yet remains for thee
  To dree or do !
The signs are flaming in the skies ;
A struggling world would yet be free,
  And live anew.
The earthquake hath not yet been born
That soon shall rock the lands around,
  Beneath their base ;
Immortal Freedom's thunder horn
As yet yields but a doleful sound
  To Europe's race.

Look round, my soul ! and see, and say
If those about thee understand
  Their mission here :
The will to smite, the power to slay,
Abound in every heart and hand
  Afar, anear ;
But, God ! must yet the conqueror's sword
Pierce mind, as heart, in this proud year ?
  O, dream it not !
It sounds a false, blaspheming word,
Begot and born of moral fear,
  And ill-begot.

To leave the world a name is nought :
To leave a name for glorious deeds
  And works of love,
A name to waken lightning thought
And fire the soul of him who reads,
  This tells above.
Napoleon sinks to-day before
The ungilded shrine, the single soul
  Of Washington :
Truth's name alone shall man adore
Long as the waves of Time shall roll
  Henceforward on.

My countrymen ! my words are weak :
My health is gone, my soul is dark,
  My heart is chill ;
Yet would I fain and fondly seek
To see you borne in freedom's bark
  O'er ocean still.
Beseech your God ! and bide your hour !
He cannot, will not long be dumb :
  Even now his tread
Is heard o'er earth with coming power ;
And coming, trust me, it will come, —
  Else were He dead.

Helen Selina, Lady Dufferin

LAMENT OF THE IRISH EMIGRANT

I 'M sittin' on the stile, Mary,
Where we sat side by side
On a bright May mornin' long ago,
When first you were my bride.
The corn was springin' fresh and green,
And the lark sang loud and high,
And the red was on your lip, Mary,
And the love-light in your eye.

The place is little changed, Mary,
The day is bright as then,
The lark's loud song is in my ear,
And the corn is green again ;
But I miss the soft clasp of your hand,
And your breath, warm on my cheek :
And I still keep list'nin' for the words
You never more will speak.

'T is but a step down yonder lane,
And the little church stands near —
The church where we were wed, Mary ;
I see the spire from here.
But the graveyard lies between, Mary,
And my step might break your rest —
For I 've laid you, darling, down to sleep,
With your baby on your breast.

I 'm very lonely now, Mary,
For the poor make no new friends ;
But, oh ! they love the better still
The few our Father sends.
And you were all I had, Mary,
My blessin' and my pride :
There 's nothing left to care for now,
Since my poor Mary died.

Yours was the good, brave heart, Mary,
That still kept hoping on,
When the trust in God had left my soul,
And my arm's young strength was gone ;
There was comfort ever on your lip,
And the kind look on your brow —
I bless you, Mary, for that same,
Though you cannot hear me now.

I thank you for the patient smile
When your heart was fit to break,
When the hunger pain was gnawin' there,
And you hid it for my sake ;
I bless you for the pleasant word,
When your heart was sad and sore —
Oh ! I 'm thankful you are gone, Mary,
Where grief can't reach you more !

I 'm biddin' you a long farewell,
My Mary — kind and true !
But I 'll not forget you, darling,
In the land I 'm goin' to :
They say there 's bread and work for all,
And the sun shines always there,
But I 'll not forget old Ireland,
Were it fifty times as fair !

And often in those grand old woods
I 'll sit, and shut my eyes,
And my heart will travel back again
To the place where Mary lies ;
And I 'll think I see the little stile
Where we sat side by side,
And the springin' corn, and the bright May morn,
When first you were my bride.

Caroline Elizabeth Sarah Norton

(LADY STIRLING-MAXWELL)

WE HAVE BEEN FRIENDS TOGETHER

WE have been friends together,
In sunshine and in shade ;
Since first beneath the chestnut-trees
In infancy we played.

But coldness dwells within thy heart,
A cloud is on thy brow ;
We have been friends together —
Shall a light word part us now ?

We have been gay together ;
We have laugh'd at little jests ;

For the fount of hope was gushing
  Warm and joyous in our breasts.
But laughter now hath fled thy lip,
  And sullen glooms thy brow ;
We have been gay together —
  Shall a light word part us now ?

We have been sad together,
  We have wept, with bitter tears,
O'er the grass-grown graves, where slumber'd
  The hopes of early years.
The voices which are silent there
  Would bid thee clear thy brow ;
We have been sad together —
  Oh ! what shall part us now ?

THE KING OF DENMARK'S RIDE

Word was brought to the Danish king
  (Hurry !)
That the love of his heart lay suffering,
And pin'd for the comfort his voice would bring ;
  (Oh ! ride as though you were flying !)
Better he loves each golden curl
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl ;
  And his rose of the isles is dying !

Thirty nobles saddled with speed,
  (Hurry !)
Each one mounting a gallant steed
Which he kept for battle and days of need ;
  (Oh ! ride as though you were flying !)
Spurs were struck in the foaming flank ;
Worn-out chargers stagger'd and sank ;
Bridles were slacken'd, and girths were burst ;
But ride as they would, the king rode first,
  For his rose of the isles lay dying !

His nobles are beaten, one by one ;
  (Hurry !)
They have fainted, and falter'd, and homeward gone ;
His little fair page now follows alone,
  For strength and for courage trying.
The king look'd back at that faithful child ;
Wan was the face that answering smil'd ;
They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
Then he dropp'd ; and only the king rode in
  Where his rose of the isles lay dying !

The king blew a blast on his bugle horn ;
  (Silence !)
No answer came ; but faint and forlorn
An echo return'd on the cold gray morn,
  Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
The castle portal stood grimly wide ;
None welcom'd the king from that weary ride ;
For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
The pale sweet form of the welcomer lay,
  Who had yearn'd for his voice while dying !

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,
  Stood weary.
The king return'd from her chamber of rest,
The thick sobs choking in his breast ;
  And, that dumb companion eyeing,
The tears gush'd forth which he strove to check ;
He bowed his head on his charger's neck :
" O steed — that every nerve didst strain,
Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
  To the halls where my love lay dying ! "

LOVE NOT

Love not, love not ! ye hapless sons of clay !
Hope's gayest wreaths are made of earthly flowers —
Things that are made to fade and fall away
Ere they have blossom'd for a few short hours.
  Love not !

Love not ! the thing ye love may change :
The rosy lip may cease to smile on you,
The kindly-beaming eye grow cold and strange,
The heart still warmly beat, yet not be true.
  Love not !

Love not ! the thing you love may die,
May perish from the gay and gladsome earth ;
The silent stars, the blue and smiling sky,
Beam o'er its grave, as once upon its birth.
  Love not !

Love not ! oh warning vainly said
In present hours as in the years gone by ;
Love flings a halo round the dear ones' head,
Faultless, immortal, till they change or die.
  Love not !

John Francis Waller

KITTY NEIL

"Ah, sweet Kitty Neil, rise up from that wheel,
Your neat little foot will be weary from spinning;
Come trip down with me to the sycamore-tree,
Half the parish is there, and the dance is beginning.
The sun is gone down, but the full harvest-moon
Shines sweetly and cool on the dew-whiten'd valley,
While all the air rings with the soft, loving things
Each little bird sings in the green shaded alley."

With a blush and a smile Kitty rose up the while,
Her eye in the glass, as she bound her hair, glancing;
'T is hard to refuse when a young lover sues,
So she could n't but choose to — go off to the dancing.
And now on the green the glad groups are seen,
Each gay-hearted lad with the lass of his choosing;
And Pat, without fail, leads out sweet Kitty Neil, —
Somehow, when he ask'd, she ne'er thought of refusing.

Now, Felix Magee puts his pipes to his knee,
And with flourish so free sets each couple in motion;
With a cheer and a bound, the lads patter the ground,
The maids move around just like swans on the ocean:
Cheeks bright as the rose — feet light as the doe's,
Now coyly retiring, now boldly advancing —
Search the world all round, from the sky to the ground,
No such sight can be found as an Irish lass dancing!

Sweet Kate! who could view your bright eyes of deep blue,
Beaming humidly through their dark lashes so mildly,
Your fair-turned arm, heaving breast, rounded form,
Nor feel his heart warm, and his pulses throb wildly;
Young Pat feels his heart, as he gazes, depart,
Subdued by the smart of such painful yet sweet love;
The sight leaves his eye, as he cries with a sigh,
"*Dance light, for my heart it lies under your feet, love!*"

A SPINNING-WHEEL SONG

Mellow the moonlight to shine is beginning;
Close by the window young Eileen is spinning;
Bent o'er the fire, her blind grandmother, sitting,
Is croaning, and moaning, and drowsily knitting:
"Eileen, achora, I hear some one tapping."
"'T is the ivy, dear mother, against the glass flapping."
"Eileen, I surely hear somebody sighing."
"'T is the sound, mother dear, of the summer wind dying."
Merrily, cheerily, noisily whirring,
Swings the wheel, spins the reel, while the foot 's stirring;
Sprightly, and lightly, and airily ringing,
Thrills the sweet voice of the young maiden singing.

"What 's that noise that I hear at the window, I wonder?"
"'T is the little birds chirping the holly-bush under."

"What makes you be shoving and moving your stool on,
And singing all wrong that old song of 'The Coolun?'"
There 's a form at the casement — the form of her true-love —
And he whispers, with face bent, "I 'm waiting for you, love;
Get up on the stool, through the lattice step lightly,
We 'll rove in the grove while the moon 's shining brightly."
Merrily, cheerily, noisily whirring,
Swings the wheel, spins the reel, while the foot 's stirring;
Sprightly, and lightly, and airily ringing,
Thrills the sweet voice of the young maiden singing.

The maid shakes her head, on her lip lays her fingers,
Steals up from her seat — longs to go, and yet lingers;
A frighten'd glance turns to her drowsy grandmother,
Puts one foot on the stool, spins the wheel with the other.
Lazily, easily, swings now the wheel round;
Slowly and slowly is heard now the reel's sound;
Noiseless and light to the lattice above her
The maid steps — then leaps to the arms of her lover.
Slower — and slower — and slower the wheel swings;
Lower — and lower — and lower the reel rings;
Ere the reel and the wheel stopp'd their ringing and moving,
Through the grove the young lovers by moonlight are roving.

Sir Samuel Ferguson

THE FAIRY THORN

AN ULSTER BALLAD

"Get up, our Anna dear, from the weary spinning wheel;
For your father 's on the hill, and your mother is asleep;
Come up above the crags, and we 'll dance a highland reel
Around the fairy thorn on the steep."

At Anna Grace's door 't was thus the maidens cried,
Three merry maidens fair in kirtles of the green;
And Anna laid the sock and the weary wheel aside,
The fairest of the four, I ween.

They 're glancing through the glimmer of the quiet eve,
Away in milky wavings of neck and ankle bare;
The heavy-sliding stream in its sleepy song they leave,
And the crags in the ghostly air;
And linking hand in hand, and singing as they go,
The maids along the hill-side have ta'en their fearless way,
Till they come to where the rowan trees in lovely beauty grow
Beside the Fairy Hawthorn gray.

The hawthorn stands between the ashes tall and slim,
Like matron with her twin grand-daughters at her knee;
The rowan berries cluster o'er her low head gray and dim
In ruddy kisses sweet to see.

The merry maidens four have ranged them in a row,
Between each lovely couple a stately rowan stem,
And away in mazes wavy like skimming birds they go, —
Oh, never caroll'd bird like them!

But solemn is the silence of the silvery haze
That drinks away their voices in echoless repose,

And dreamily the evening has still'd the haunted braes,
And dreamier the gloaming grows.

And sinking one by one, like lark-notes from the sky
When the falcon's shadow saileth across the open shaw,
Are hush'd the maidens' voices, as cowering down they lie
In the flutter of their sudden awe.

For, from the air above and the grassy ground beneath,
And from the mountain-ashes and the old white thorn between,
A power of faint enchantment doth through their beings breathe,
And they sink down together on the green.

They sink together silent, and, stealing side by side,
They fling their lovely arms o'er their drooping necks so fair,
Then vainly strive again their naked arms to hide,
For their shrinking necks again are bare.

Thus clasp'd and prostrate all, with their heads together bow'd,
Soft o'er their bosoms beating — the only human sound —
They hear the silky footsteps of the silent fairy crowd,
Like a river in the air, gliding round.

Nor scream can any raise, nor prayer can any say,
But wild, wild, the terror of the speechless three,
For they feel fair Anna Grace drawn silently away,
By whom they dare not look to see.

They feel their tresses twine with her parting locks of gold,
And the curls elastic falling, as her head withdraws ;
They feel her sliding arms from their tranced arms unfold,
But they dare not look to see the cause :

For heavy on their senses the faint enchantment lies
Through all that night of anguish and perilous amaze ;
And neither fear nor wonder can ope their quivering eyes,
Or their limbs from the cold ground raise,

Till out of night the earth has roll'd her dewy side,
With every haunted mountain and streamy vale below ;
When, as the mist dissolves in the yellow morning-tide,
The maidens' trance dissolveth so.

Then fly the ghastly three as swiftly as they may,
And tell their tale of sorrow to anxious friends in vain :
They pin'd away and died within the year and day,
And ne'er was Anna Grace seen again.

Thomas Osborne Davis

THE SACK OF BALTIMORE[1]

The summer sun is falling soft on Carbery's hundred isles,
The summer sun is gleaming still through Gabriel's rough defiles ;
Old Innisherkin's crumbled fane looks like a moulting bird,
And in a calm and sleepy swell the ocean tide is heard :
The hookers lie upon the beach; the children cease their play ;
The gossips leave the little inn ; the households kneel to pray ;
And full of love, and peace, and rest, its daily labor o'er,
Upon that cosy creek there lay the town of Baltimore.

A deeper rest, a starry trance, has come with midnight there ;

[1] His last poem.

No sound, except that throbbing wave, in earth, or sea, or air!
The massive capes and ruin'd towers seem conscious of the calm;
The fibrous sod and stunted trees are breathing heavy balm.
So still the night, these two long barques round Dunashad that glide
Must trust their oars, methinks not few, against the ebbing tide.
Oh, some sweet mission of true love must urge them to the shore!
They bring some lover to his bride who sighs in Baltimore.

All, all asleep within each roof along that rocky street,
And these must be the lover's friends, with gently gliding feet —
A stifled gasp, a dreamy noise! "The roof is in a flame!"
From out their beds and to their doors rush maid and sire and dame,
And meet upon the threshold stone the gleaming sabre's fall,
And o'er each black and bearded face the white or crimson shawl.
The yell of "Allah!" breaks above the prayer, and shriek, and roar:
O blessed God! the Algerine is lord of Baltimore!

Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword;
Then sprung the mother on the brand with which her son was gor'd;
Then sunk the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching wild;
Then fled the maiden moaning faint, and nestled with the child:
But see! yon pirate strangled lies, and crush'd with splashing heel,
While o'er him in an Irish hand there sweeps his Syrian steel:
Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their store,
There 's one hearth well avenged in the sack of Baltimore.

Midsummer morn in woodland nigh the birds begin to sing,
They see not now the milking maids, — deserted is the spring;
Midsummer day this gallant rides from distant Bandon's town,
These hookers cross'd from stormy Skull, that skiff from Affadown;
They only found the smoking walls with neighbors' blood besprent,
And on the strewed and trampled beach awhile they wildly went,
Then dash'd to sea, and pass'd Cape Clear, and saw, five leagues before,
The pirate-galley vanishing that ravaged Baltimore.

Oh, some must tug the galley's oar, and some must tend the steed;
This boy will bear a Scheik's chibouk, and that a Bey's jerreed.
Oh, some are for the arsenals by beauteous Dardanelles;
And some are in the caravan to Mecca's sandy dells.
The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Dey:
She 's safe — she 's dead — she stabb'd him in the midst of his Serai!
And when to die a death of fire that noble maid they bore,
She only smiled, O'Driscoll's child; she thought of Baltimore.

'T is two long years since sunk the town beneath that bloody band,
And all around its trampled hearths a larger concourse stand,
Where high upon a gallows-tree a yelling wretch is seen:
'T is Hackett of Dungarvan—he who steer'd the Algerine!
He fell amid a sullen shout with scarce a passing prayer,
For he had slain the kith and kin of many a hundred there.
Some mutter'd of MacMurchadh, who brought the Norman o'er;
Some curs'd him with Iscariot, that day in Baltimore.

THE BOATMAN OF KINSALE

His kiss is sweet, his word is kind,
His love is rich to me;
I could not in a palace find
A truer heart than he.
The eagle shelters not his nest
From hurricane and hail
More bravely than he guards my breast —
The Boatman of Kinsale.

The wind that round the Fastnet sweeps
Is not a whit more pure,
The goat that down Cnoc Sheehy leaps
Has not a foot more sure.
No firmer hand nor freer eye
E'er faced an autumn gale,
De Courcy's heart is not so high —
The Boatman of Kinsale.

The brawling squires may heed him not,
The dainty stranger sneer,
But who will dare to hurt our cot
When Myles O'Hea is here?
The scarlet soldiers pass along:
They'd like, but fear to rail:
His blood is hot, his blow is strong —
The Boatman of Kinsale.

His hooker 's in the Scilly van,
When seines are in the foam,
But money never made the man,
Nor wealth a happy home.
So, bless'd with love and liberty,
While he can trim a sail,
He 'll trust in God, and cling to me —
The Boatman of Kinsale.

THE WELCOME

Come in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you 're look'd for, or come without warning:
Kisses and welcome you 'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I 'll adore you!
Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;
The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,
And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't sever!"

I 'll pull you sweet flowers, to wear if you choose them, —
Or, after you 've kiss'd them, they 'll lie on my bosom;
I 'll fetch from the mountain its breeze to inspire you;
I 'll fetch from my fancy a tale that won't tire you.
Oh! your step 's like the rain to the summer-vex'd farmer,
Or sabre and shield to a knight without armor;
I 'll sing you sweet songs till the stars rise above me,
Then, wandering, I 'll wish you in silence to love me.

We 'll look through the trees at the cliff and the eyrie;
We 'll tread round the rath on the track of the fairy;
We 'll look on the stars, and we 'll list to the river,
Till you ask of your darling what gift you can give her:
Oh! she 'll whisper you — "Love, as unchangeably beaming,
And trust, when in secret, most tunefully streaming;
Till the starlight of heaven above us shall quiver,
As our souls flow in one down eternity's river."

So come in the evening, or come in the morning;
Come when you 're looked for, or come without warning:
Kisses and welcome you 'll find here before you,
And the oftener you come here the more I 'll adore you!
Light is my heart since the day we were plighted;
Red is my cheek that they told me was blighted;
The green of the trees looks far greener than ever,
And the linnets are singing, "True lovers don't sever!"

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy

THE IRISH RAPPAREES

RIGH Shemus[1] he has gone to France, and left his crown behind ;
Ill luck be theirs, both day and night, put running in his mind !
Lord Lucan followed after with his Slashers brave and true,
And now the doleful keen is raised — "What will poor Ireland do ?
What must poor Ireland do ?
Our luck," they say, "has gone to France — what can poor Ireland do ?"

O, never fear for Ireland, for she has soldiers still,
For Rory's boys are in the wood, and Remy's on the hill !
And never had poor Ireland more loyal hearts than these —
May God be kind and good to them, the faithful Rapparees !
The fearless Rapparees !
The jewel were you, Rory, with your Irish Rapparees !

O, black 's your heart, Clan Oliver, and colder than the clay !
O, high 's your head, Clan Sassenach, since Sarsfield 's gone away !
It 's little love you bear to us for sake of long ago ;
But hold your hand, for Ireland still can strike a deadly blow —
Can strike a mortal blow :
Och, duar-na-Críosd ! 't is she that still could strike a deadly blow !

The Master's bawn, the Master's seat, a surly bodagh fills ;
The Master's son, an outlawed man, is riding on the hills.
But God be prais'd that round him throng, as thick as summer bees,
The swords that guarded Limerick wall — his loyal Rapparees !
His loving Rapparees !
Who dare say no to Rory Oge, with all his Rapparees ?

Black Billy Grimes of Latnamard, he rack'd us long and sore —
God rest the faithful hearts he broke ! — we 'll never see them more ;
But I 'll go bail he 'll break no more, while Truagh has gallows-trees ;
For why ? — he met, one lonesome night, the fearless Rapparees !
The angry Rapparees !
They never sin no more, my boys, who cross the Rapparees !

Now, Sassenach and Cromweller, take heed of what I say,
Keep down your black and angry looks that scorn us night and day :
For there 's a just and wrathful Judge that every action sees,
And He 'll make strong, to right our wrong, the faithful Rapparees !
The fearless Rapparees !
The men that rode at Sarsfield's side, the roving Rapparees !

Denis Florence MacCarthy

BLESS THE DEAR OLD VERDANT LAND

BLESS the dear old verdant land !
Brother, wert thou born of it ?
As thy shadow life doth stand
Twining round its rosy band,
Did an Irish mother's hand
Guide thee in the morn of it ?

Did a father's first command
Teach thee love or scorn of it ?

Thou who tread'st its fertile breast,
Dost thou feel a glow for it ?
Thou of all its charms possest,
Living on its first and best,
Art thou but a thankless guest
Or a traitor foe for it ?

[1] King James II.

If thou lovest, where 's the test ?
  Wilt thou strike a blow for it ?

Has the past no goading sting
  That can make thee rouse for it ?
Does thy land's reviving spring,
Full of buds and blossoming,
Fail to make thy cold heart cling,
  Breathing lover's vows for it ?
With the circling ocean's ring
  Thou wert made a spouse for it.

Hast thou kept as thou shouldst keep
  Thy affections warm for it,
Letting no cold feeling creep
Like an ice-breath o'er the deep,
Freezing to a stony sleep
  Hopes the heart would form for it,
Glories that like rainbows peep
  Through the darkening storm for it ?

Son of this down-trodden land,
  Aid us in the fight for it.
We seek to make it great and grand,
Its shipless bays, its naked strand,
By canvas-swelling breezes fanned :
  Oh, what a glorious sight for it,
The past expiring like a brand
  In morning's rosy light for it !

Think, this dear old land is thine,
  And thou a traitor slave of it :
Think how the Switzer leads his kine,
When pale the evening star doth shine ;
His song has home in every line,
  Freedom in every stave of it ;
Think how the German loves his Rhine
  And worships every wave of it !

Our own dear land is bright as theirs,
  But oh ! our hearts are cold for it ;
Awake ! we are not slaves, but heirs.
Our fatherland requires our cares,
Our speech with men, with God our prayers;
  Spurn blood-stain'd Judas gold for it :
Let us do all that honor dares —
  Be earnest, faithful, bold for it !

THE IRISH WOLF-HOUND

FROM "THE FORAY OF CON O'DONNELL"

As fly the shadows o'er the grass,
  He flies with step as light and sure,
He hunts the wolf through Tostan pass,
  And starts the deer by Lisanoure.
The music of the Sabbath bells,
  O Con ! has not a sweeter sound
Than when along the valley swells
  The cry of John Mac Donnell's hound.

His stature tall, his body long,
  His back like night, his breast like snow,
His fore-leg pillar-like and strong,
  His hind-leg like a bended bow ;
Rough curling hair, head long and thin,
  His ear a leaf so small and round ;
Not Bran, the favorite dog of Fin,
  Could rival John Mac Donnell's hound.

Bartholomew Dowling

THE REVEL

(EAST INDIA)

We meet 'neath the sounding rafter,
  And the walls around are bare ;
As they shout back our peals of laughter
  It seems that the dead are there.
Then stand to your glasses, steady !
  We drink in our comrades' eyes :
One cup to the dead already —
  Hurrah for the next that dies !

Not here are the goblets glowing,
  Not here is the vintage sweet ;
'T is cold, as our hearts are growing,
  And dark as the doom we meet.
But stand to your glasses, steady !
  And soon shall our pulses rise :
A cup to the dead already —
  Hurrah for the next that dies !

There 's many a hand that 's shaking,
  And many a cheek that 's sunk ;
But soon, though our hearts are breaking,
  They 'll burn with the wine we 've drunk.
Then stand to your glasses, steady !
  'T is here the revival lies :
Quaff a cup to the dead already —
  Hurrah for the next that dies !

Time was when we laugh'd at others ;
We thought we were wiser then ;
Ha ! ha ! let them think of their mothers,
Who hope to see them again.
No ! stand to your glasses, steady !
The thoughtless is here the wise :
One cup to the dead already —
Hurrah for the next that dies !

Not a sigh for the lot that darkles,
Not a tear for the friends that sink ;
We 'll fall, 'midst the wine-cup's sparkles,
As mute as the wine we drink.
Come stand to your glasses, steady !
'T is this that the respite buys :
A cup to the dead already —
Hurrah for the next that dies !

There 's a mist on the glass congealing,
'T is the hurricane's sultry breath ;
And thus does the warmth of feeling
Turn ice in the grasp of Death.

But stand to your glasses, steady !
For a moment the vapor flies :
Quaff a cup to the dead already —
Hurrah for the next that dies !

Who dreads to the dust returning ?
Who shrinks from the sable shore,
Where the high and haughty yearning
Of the soul can sting no more ?
No, stand to your glasses, steady !
The world is a world of lies :
A cup to the dead already —
And hurrah for the next that dies !

Cut off from the land that bore us,
Betray'd by the land we find,
When the brightest have gone before us,
And the dullest are most behind —
Stand, stand to your glasses, steady !
'T is all we have left to prize :
One cup to the dead already —
Hurrah for the next that dies !

John Kells Ingram

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD

Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight ?
Who blushes at the name ?
When cowards mock the patriot's fate,
Who hangs his head for shame ?
He 's all a knave or half a slave
Who slights his country thus ;
But a true man, like you, man,
Will fill your glass with us.

We drink the memory of the brave,
The faithful and the few :
Some lie far off beyond the wave,
Some sleep in Ireland, too ;
All, all are gone — but still lives on
The fame of those who died :
All true men, like you, men,
Remember them with pride.

Some on the shores of distant lands
Their weary hearts have laid,
And by the stranger's heedless hands
Their lonely graves were made ;
But, though their clay be far away
Beyond the Atlantic foam,
In true men, like you, men,
Their spirit 's still at home.

The dust of some is Irish earth ;
Among their own they rest ;
And the same land that gave them birth
Has caught them to her breast ;
And we will pray that from their clay
Full many a race may start
Of true men, like you, men,
To act as brave a part.

They rose in dark and evil days
To right their native land ;
They kindled here a living blaze
That nothing shall withstand.
Alas, that Might can vanquish Right !
They fell, and pass'd away ;
But true men, like you, men,
Are plenty here to-day.

Then here 's their memory — may it be
For us a guiding light,
To cheer our strife for liberty,
And teach us to unite !
Through good and ill, be Ireland's still,
Though sad as theirs your fate ;
And true men be you, men,
Like those of Ninety-Eight.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee

THE CELTIC CROSS

THROUGH storm and fire and gloom, I see it stand,
Firm, broad, and tall,
The Celtic Cross that marks our Fatherland,
Amid them all!
Druids and Danes and Saxons vainly rage
Around its base;
It standeth shock on shock, and age on age,
Star of our scatter'd race.

O Holy Cross! dear symbol of the dread
Death of our Lord,
Around thee long have slept our martyr dead
Sward over sward.
An hundred bishops I myself can count
Among the slain:
Chiefs, captains, rank and file, a shining mount
Of God's ripe grain.

The monarch's mace, the Puritan's claymore,
Smote thee not down;
On headland steep, on mountain summit hoar,
In mart and town,
In Glendalough, in Ara, in Tyrone,
We find thee still,
Thy open arms still stretching to thine own,
O'er town and lough and hill.

And would they tear thee out of Irish soil,
The guilty fools!
How time must mock their antiquated toil
And broken tools!
Cranmer and Cromwell from thy grasp retir'd,
Baffled and thrown;
William and Anne to sap thy site conspir'd,—
The rest is known.

Holy Saint Patrick, father of our faith,
Belov'd of God!
Shield thy dear Church from the impending scaith,
Or, if the rod
Must scourge it yet again, inspire and raise
To emprise high
Men like the heroic race of other days,
Who joyed to die.

Fear! wherefore should the Celtic people fear
Their Church's fate?
The day is not — the day was never near —
Could desolate
The Destin'd Island, all whose seedy clay
Is holy ground:
Its cross shall stand till that predestin'd day
When Erin's self is drown'd.

THE IRISH WIFE

I WOULD not give my Irish wife
For all the dames of the Saxon land;
I would not give my Irish wife
For the Queen of France's hand;
For she to me is dearer
Than castles strong, or lands, or life:
An outlaw — so I 'm near her
To love till death my Irish wife.

O what would be this home of mine,
A ruin'd, hermit-haunted place,
But for the light that nightly shines
Upon its walls from Kathleen's face!
What comfort in a mine of gold,
What pleasure in a royal life,
If the heart within lay dead and cold,
If I could not wed my Irish wife?

I knew the law forbade the banns;
I knew my king abhorr'd her race;
Who never bent before their clans
Must bow before their ladies' grace.
Take all my forfeited domain,
I cannot wage with kinsmen strife:
Take knightly gear and noble name,
And I will keep my Irish wife.

My Irish wife has clear blue eyes,
My heaven by day, my stars by night;
And twin-like truth and fondness lie
Within her swelling bosom white.
My Irish wife has golden hair,
Apollo's harp had once such strings,

Apollo's self might pause to hear
Her bird-like carol when she sings.

I would not give my Irish wife
For all the dames of the Saxon land ;
I would not give my Irish wife
For the Queen of France's hand ;
For she to me is dearer
Than castles strong, or lands, or life :
In death I would be near her,
And rise beside my Irish wife.

THE EXILE'S DEVOTION

If I forswear the art divine
That glorifies the dead,
What comfort then can I call mine,
What solace seek instead ?
For from my birth our country's fame
Was life to me, and love ;
And for each loyal Irish name
Some garland still I wove.

I 'd rather be the bird that sings
Above the martyr's grave,
Than fold in fortune's cage my wings
And feel my soul a slave ;
I 'd rather turn one simple verse
True to the Gaelic ear
Than sapphic odes I might rehearse
With senates listening near.

Oh, native land ! dost ever mark,
When the world's din is drown'd
Betwixt the daylight and the dark,
A wandering solemn sound
That on the western wind is borne
Across thy dewy breast ?
It is the voice of those who mourn
For thee, in the far West.

For them and theirs I oft essay
Thy ancient art of song,
And often sadly turn away,
Deeming my rashness wrong ;
For well I ween, a loving will
Is all the art I own :
Ah me ! could love suffice for skill,
What triumphs I had known !

My native land ! my native land !
Live in my memory still !
Break on my brain, ye surges grand !
Stand up, mist-cover'd hill !
Still on the mirror of the mind
The scenes I love, I see :
Would I could fly on the western wind,
My native land, to thee !

Jane Francesca Speranza, Lady Wilde

("SPERANZA")

THE VOICE OF THE POOR

Was sorrow ever like unto our sorrow ?
O God above !
Will our night never change into a morrow
Of joy and love ?
A deadly gloom is on us — waking — sleeping —
Like the darkness at noon-tide
That fell upon the pallid Mother, weeping
By the Crucified.

Before us die our brothers of starvation :
Around are cries of famine and despair :
Where is hope for us, or comfort, or salvation ?
Where, oh, where ?
If the angels ever hearken, downward bending,
They are weeping, we are sure,
At the litanies of human groans ascending
From the crush'd hearts of the poor.

When the human rests in love upon the human,
All grief is light ;
But who bends one kind glance to illumine
Our life-long night ?
The air around is ringing with their laughter ;
God has only made the rich to smile :

But we, in our rags and want and woe, we follow after,
Weeping the while.

And the laughter seems but utter'd to deride us :
When, oh ! when,
Will fall the frozen barriers that divide us
From other men ?
Will ignorance for ever thus enslave us !
Will misery for ever lay us low ?
All are eager with their insults, but to save us
None, none, we know.

We never knew a childhood's mirth and gladness,
Nor the proud heart of youth free and brave ;
Oh ! a death-like dream of wretchedness and sadness
Is our life's weary journey to the grave.
Day by day we lower sink and lower,
Till the god-like soul within
Falls crush'd, beneath the fearful demon power
Of poverty and sin.

So we toil on — on, with fever burning
In heart and brain ;
So we toil on — on, through bitter scorning,
Want, woe and pain :
We dare not raise our eyes to the blue heaven
Or the toil must cease ;
We dare not breathe the fresh air God has given,
One hour in peace.

We must toil, though the light of life is burning,
Oh, how dim !
We must toil on our sick bed, feebly turning
Our eyes to Him
Who alone can hear the pale lip faintly saying
With scarce mov'd breath,
And the paler hands, uplifted, and the praying, —
"Lord, grant us *Death !*"

Mary Eva Kelly

TIPPERARY

Were you ever in sweet Tipperary, where the fields are so sunny and green,
And the heath-brown Slieve-bloom and the Galtees look down with so proud a mien ?
'T is there you would see more beauty than is on all Irish ground —
God bless you, my sweet Tipperary ! for where could your match be found ?

They say that your hand is fearful, that darkness is in your eye ;
But I 'll not let them dare to talk so black and bitter a lie.
O, no ! *macushla storin*, bright, bright, and warm are you,
With hearts as bold as the men of old, to yourself and your country true.

And when there is gloom upon you, bid them think who brought it there —
Sure a frown or a word of hatred was not made for your face so fair ;
You 've a hand for the grasp of friendship — another to make them quake,
And they 're welcome to whichsoever it pleases them to take.

Shall our homes, like the huts of Connaught, be crumbled before our eyes ?
Shall we fly, like a flock of wild geese, from all that we love and prize ?
No ! by those that were here before us, no churl shall our tyrant be,
Our land it is theirs by plunder — but, by Brigid, ourselves are free !

No ! we do not forget the greatness did once to sweet *Eiré* belong ;
No treason or craven spirit was ever our race among ;
And no frown or word of hatred we give — but to pay them back ;
In evil we only follow our enemies' darksome track.

O, come for awhile among us and give us the friendly hand !
And you 'll see that old Tipperary is a loving and gladsome land ;
From Upper to Lower Ormonde, bright welcomes and smiles will spring :
On the plains of Tipperary the stranger is like a king.

Ellen Mary Patrick Downing

WERE I BUT HIS OWN WIFE

WERE I but his own wife, to guard and to guide him,
'T is little of sorrow should fall on my dear ;
I 'd chant my low love-verses, stealing beside him,
So faint and so tender his heart would but hear ;
I 'd pull the wild blossoms from valley and highland,
And there at his feet I would lay them all down ;
I 'd sing him the songs of our poor stricken island,
Till his heart was on fire with a love like my own.

There 's a rose by his dwelling, — I 'd tend the lone treasure,
That he might have flowers when the summer would come ;
There 's a harp in his hall, — I would wake its sweet measure,
For he must have music to brighten his home.

Were I but his own wife, to guide and to guard him,
'T is little of sorrow should fall on my dear ;
For every kind glance my whole life would award him,
In sickness I 'd soothe and in sadness I 'd cheer.

My heart is a fount welling upward forever !
When I think of my true-love, by night or by day,
That heart keeps its faith like a fast-flowing river
Which gushes forever and sings on its way.
I have thoughts full of peace for his soul to repose in,
Were I but his own wife, to win and to woo ;
O sweet, if the night of misfortune were closing,
To rise like the morning star, darling, for you !

"THE OATEN FLUTE"

William Barnes

(DORSET)

WOONE SMILE MWORE

O ! MEÄRY, when the zun went down,
Woone night in spring, w' viry rim,
Behind the nap wi' woody crown,
An' left your smilèn feäce so dim ;
Your little sister there, inside,
Wi' bellows on her little knee,
Did blow the vire, a-glearèn wide
Drough window-peänes, that I could zee, —
As you did stan' wi' me, avore
The house, a-peärten,—woone smile mwore.

The chatt'rèn birds, a-risèn high,
  An' zinkèn low, did swiftly vlee
Vrom shrinkèn moss, a-growèn dry,
  Upon the leänèn apple tree.
An' there the dog, a-whippèn wide
  His heäiry taïl, an' comèn near,
Did fondly lay ageän your zide
  His coal-black nose an' russet ear :
To win what I 'd a-won avore,
Vrom your gaÿ feäce, his woone smile mwore.

An' while your mother bustled sprack,
  A-gettèn supper out in hall,
An' cast her sheäde, a-whiv'rèn black
  Avore the vire, upon the wall ;
Your brother come, wi' easy peäce,
  In drough the slammèn geäte, along
The path, wi' healthy-bloomèn feäce,
  A-whis'lèn shrill his last new zong :
An' when he come avore the door,
He met vrom you his woone smile mwore.

Now you that wer the daughter there,
  Be mother on a husband's vloor,
An' mid ye meet wi' less o' ceäre
  Than what your heärty mother bore ;
An' if abroad I have to rue
  The bitter tongue, or wrongvul deed,
Mid I come hwome to sheäre wi' you
  What 's needvul free o' pinchèn need :
An' vind that you ha' still in store
  My evenèn meal, an' woone smile mwore.

BLACKMWORE MAIDENS

The primrwose in the sheäde do blow,
The cowslip in the zun,
The thyme upon the down do grow,
The clote where streams do run ;
An' where do pretty maidens grow
An' blow, but where the tow'r
Do rise among the bricken tuns,
In Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you could zee their comely gaït,
An' pretty feäces' smiles,
A-trippèn on so light o' waïght,
An' steppèn off the stiles ;
A-gwaïn to church, as bells do swing
An' ring 'ithin the tow'r,
You 'd own the pretty maïdens' pleäce
Is Blackmwore by the Stour.

If you vrom Wimborne took your road,
To Stower or Paladore,
An' all the farmers' housen show'd
Their daughters at the door ;
You 'd cry to bachelors at hwome —
"Here, come : 'ithin an hour
You 'll vind ten maïdens to your mind,
In Blackmwore by the Stour."

An' if you look'd 'ithin their door,
To zee em in their pleäce,
A-doèn housework up avore
Their smilèn mother's feäce ;
You 'd cry — "Why, if a man would wive
An' thrive, 'ithout a dow'r,
Then let en look en out a wife
In Blackmwore by the Stour."

As I upon my road did pass
A school-house back in Maÿ,
There out upon the beäten grass
Wer maïdens at their plaÿ ;
An' as the pretty souls did tweil
An' smile, I cried, "The flow'r
O' beauty, then, is still in bud
In Blackmore by the Stour."

THE HEÄRE

(1) There be the greyhounds ! lo'k ! an' there 's the heäre !
(2) What houn's, the squier's, Thomas ? where, then, where ?
(1) Why, out in Ash Hill, near the barn, behind
Thik tree. (3) The pollard ? (1) Pollard ! no ! b 'ye blind ?
(2) There, I do zee em over-right thik cow.
(3) The red woone ? (1) No, a mile beyand her now.
(3) Oh ! there 's the heäre, a-meäkèn for the drong.
(2) My goodness ! How the dogs do zweep along,
A-pokèn out their pweinted noses' tips.
(3) He can't allow hizzelf much time vor slips !
(1) They 'll hab en, after all, I 'll bet a crown.
(2) Done vor a crown. They woon't ! He 's gwäin to groun'.
(3) He is ! (1) He idden ! (3) Ah ! 't is well his tooes
Ha' got noo corns, inside o' hobnail shoes.

(1) He 's geäme a-runnèn too. Why, he do mwore
Than eärn his life. (3) His life wer his avore.
(1) There, now the dogs wull turn en. (2) No! He 's right.
(1) He idden! (2) Ees he is! (3) He 's out o' zight.
(1) Aye, aye. His mettle wull be well a-tried
Agwaïn down Verny Hill, o' t' other zide.
They 'll have en there. (3) O no! a vew good hops
Wull teäke en on to Knapton Lower Copse.
(2) An' that 's a meesh that he 've a-took avore.
(3) Ees, that 's his hwome. (1) He 'll never reach his door.
(2) He wull. (1) He woon't. (3) Now, hark, d 'ye heär em now?
(2) O! here 's a bwoy a-come athirt the brow
O' Knapton Hill. We 'll ax en. (1) Here, my bwoy!
Canst tell us where 's the heäre? (4) He 's got awoy.
(2) Ees, got awoy, in coo'se, I never zeed
A heäre a-scotèn on wi' half his speed.
(1) Why, there, the dogs be wold, an' half a-done.
They can 't catch anything wi' lags to run.
(2) Vrom vu'st to last they had but little chance
O' catchèn o' 'n. (3) They had a perty dance.
(1) No, catch en, no! I little thought they would;
He know'd his road too well to Knapton Wood.
(3) No! no! I wish the squier would let me feäre
On rabbits till his hounds do catch thik heäre.

THE CASTLE RUINS

A HAPPY day at Whitsuntide,
As soon 's the zun begun to vall,
We all stroll'd up the steep hill-zide
To Meldon, gret an' small;
Out where the Castle wall stood high
A-mwoldrèn to the zunny sky.

An' there wi' Jenny took a stroll
Her youngest sister, Poll, so gaÿ,
Bezide John Hind, ah! merry soul,
An' mid her wedlock faÿ;
An' at our zides did plaÿ an' run
My little maïd an' smaller son.

Above the beäten mwold upsprung
The driven doust, a-spreadèn light,
An' on the new-leav'd thorn, a-hung,
Wer wool a-quiv'rèn white;
An' corn, a-sheenèn bright, did bow,
On slopèn Meldon's zunny brow.

There, down the roofless wall did glow
The zun upon the grassy vloor,
An' weakly-wandrèn winds did blow,
Unhinder'd by a door;
An' smokeless now avore the zun
Did stan' the ivy-girded tun.

My bwoy did watch the daws' bright wings
A-flappèn vrom their ivy bow'rs;
My wife did watch my maïd's light springs,
Out here an' there vor flow'rs;
And John did zee noo tow'rs, the pleäce
Vor him had only Polly's feäce.

An' there, of all that pried about
The walls, I overlook'd em best,
An' what o' that? Why, I meäde out
Noo mwore than all the rest:
That there wer woonce the nest of zome
That wer a-gone avore we come.

When woonce above the tun the smoke
Did wreathy blue among the trees,
An' down below, the livèn vo'k
Did tweil as brisk as bees;
Or zit wi' weary knees, the while
The sky wer lightless to their tweil.

Edwin Waugh

(LANCASHIRE)

THE DULE 'S I' THIS BONNET O' MINE

THE dule 's i' this bonnet o' mine ;
My ribbins 'll never be reet ;
Here, Mally, aw 'm like to be fine,
For Jamie 'll be comin' to-neet ;
He met me i' th' lone t' other day, —
Aw 're gooin' for wayter to th' well, —
An' he begg'd that aw 'd wed him i' May ; —
Bi th' mass, iv he 'll let me, aw will !

When he took my two honds into his,
Good Lord, heaw they trembled between ;
An' aw durstn't look up in his face,
Becose on him seein' my e'en ;
My cheek went as red as a rose ; —
There 's never a mortal can tell
Heaw happy aw felt ; for, thea knows,
One could n't ha' ax'd him theirsel'.

But th' tale wur at th' end o' my tung, —
To let it eawt would n't be reet, —
For aw thought to seem forrud wur wrung,
So aw towd him aw 'd tell him to-neet ;
But Mally, thae knows very weel, —
Though it is n't a thing one should own, —
Iv aw 'd th' pikein' o' th' world to mysel',
Aw 'd oather ha' Jamie or noan.

Neaw, Mally, aw 've towd tho my mind ;
What would to do iv 't wur thee ?
" Aw 'd tak him just while he 're inclin'd,
An' a farrantly bargain he 'd be ;
For Jamie 's as gradely a lad
As ever stepp'd eawt into th' sun ; —
Go, jump at thy chance, an' get wed,
An' may th' best o' th' job when it 's done ! "

Eh, dear, but it 's time to be gwon, —
Aw should n't like Jamie to wait ;
Aw connut for shame be too soon,
An' aw would n't for th' world be too late ;
Aw 'm o' ov a tremble to th' heel, —
Dost think 'at my bonnet 'll do ? —
" Be off, lass, — thae looks very weel ;
He wants noan o' th' bonnet, thae foo ! "

TH' SWEETHEART GATE

OH, there 's mony a gate eawt ov eawr teawn-end,
But nobbut one for me ;
It winds by a rindlin' wayter side,
An' o'er a posied lea,
It wanders into a shady dell ;
An' when aw 've done for th' day,
Aw never can sattle this heart o' mine,
Beawt walkin' deawn that way.

It 's noather garden, nor posied lea,
Nor wayter rindlin' clear ;
But deawn i' th vale there 's a rosy nook,
An' my true love lives theer.
It 's olez summer where th' heart 's content,
Tho' wintry winds may blow ;
An' there 's never a gate 'at 's so kind to th' fuut,
As th' gate one likes to go.

When aw set off o' sweetheartin,' aw 've
A theawsan' things to say ;
But th' very first glent o' yon chimbley-top
It drives 'em o' away ;
An' when aw meet wi' my bonny lass,
It sets my heart a-jee ; —
Oh, there 's summut i' th' leet o' yon two blue e'en
That plays the dule wi' me !

When th' layrock 's finished his wark aboon,
An' laid his music by,
He flutters deawn to his mate, an' stops
Till dayleet stirs i' th' sky.
Though Matty sends me away at dark,
Aw know that hoo 's reet full well ; —
An' it 's heaw aw love a true-hearted lass,
No mortal tung can tell !

Aw wish that Candlemas day were past,
When wakin' time comes on ;
An' aw wish that Kesmass time were here,
An' Matty an' me were one.
Aw wish this wanderin' wark were o'er —
This maunderin' to an' fro ;
That aw could go whoam to my own true love,
An' stop at neet an' o'.

OWD PINDER

Owd Pinder were a rackless foo,
  An' spent his days i' spreein';
At th' end ov every drinkin'-do,
  He 're sure to crack o' deein';
"Go, sell my rags, an' sell my shoon;
  Aw 's never live to trail 'em;
My ballis-pipes are eawt o' tune,
  An' th' wynt begins to fail 'em!

"Eawr Matty 's very fresh an' yung;
  'T would ony mon bewilder;
Hoo 'll wed again afore it 's lung,
  For th' lass is fond o' childer;
My bit o' brass 'll fly, — yo 'n see, —
  When th' coffin-lid has screen'd me;
It gwos again my pluck to dee,
  An' lev her wick beheend me.

"Come, Matty, come, an' cool my yed,
  Aw 'm finish'd, to my thinkin';"
Hoo happ'd him nicely up, an' said, —
  "Thae 's brought it on wi' drinkin'!"

"Nay, nay," said he, "my fuddle 's done;
  We 're partin' t' one fro' t' other;
So, promise me that when a 'm gwon,
  Thea 'll never wed another!"

"Th' owd tale," said hoo, an' laft her stoo,
  "It 's rayley past believin';
Thee think o' th' world thea 'rt goin' to,
  An' leave this world to th' livin';
What use to me can deead folk be?
  Thae 's kilt thisel' wi spreein';
An' iv that 's o' thae wants wi' me,
  Get forrud wi' thi deein'!"

He scrat his yed, he rubb'd his e'e,
  An' then he donn'd his breeches;
"Eawr Matty gets as fause," said he,
  "As one o' Pendle witches;
Iv ever aw 'm to muster wit,
  It mun be now or never;
Aw think aw 'll try to live a bit;
  It would n't do to lev her!"

Samuel Laycock

(LANCASHIRE)

WELCOME, BONNY BRID!

Tha 'rt welcome, little bonny brid,
But should n't ha' come just when tha did;
  Toimes are bad.
We 're short o' pobbies for eawr Joe,
But that, of course, tha did n't know,
  Did ta, lad?

Aw've often yeard mi feyther tell,
'At when aw coom i' th' world misel
  Trade wur slack;
An' neaw it 's hard wark pooin' throo —
But aw munno fear thee; iv aw do
  Tha 'll go back.

Cheer up! these toimes 'ull awter soon;
Aw 'm beawn to beigh another spoon —
  One for thee;
An' as tha 's sich a pratty face,
Aw 'll let thee have eawr Charley's place
  On mi knee.

God bless thee, love, aw 'm fain tha 'rt come,
Just try an' mak thisel awhoam:
  What ar 't co'd?
Tha 'rt loike thi mother to a tee,
But tha 's thi feyther's nose, aw see,
  Well, aw 'm blow'd!

Come, come, tha need n't look so shy,
Aw am no' blackin' thee, not I;
  Settle deawn,
An' tak this haup'ney for thisel',
There 's lots o' sugar-sticks to sell
  Deawn i' th' teawn.

Aw know when furst aw coom to th' leet
Aw 're fond o' owt 'at tasted sweet;
  Tha 'll be th' same.
But come, tha 's never towd thi dad
What he 's to co thi yet, mi lad —
  What 's thi name?

Hush! hush! tha munno cry this way,
But get this sope o' cinder tay
  While it 's warm;

Mi mother us'd to give it me,
When aw wur sich a lad as thee,
In her arm.

Hush a babby, hush a bee —
Oh, what a temper ! dear a-me,
Heaw tha skroikes !
Here 's a bit o' sugar, sithee ;
Howd thi noise, an' then aw 'll gie thee
Owt tha loikes.

We 'n nobbut getten coarsish fare,
But eawt o' this tha 'st ha' thi share,
Never fear.
Aw hope tha 'll never want a meel,
But allus fill thi bally weel
While tha 'rt here.

Thi feyther 's noan bin wed so long,
An' yet tha sees he 's middlin' throng
Wi' yo' o :
Besides thi little brother, Ted,
We 'n one up-steers, asleep i' bed
Wi' eawr Joe.

But though we 'n childer two or three,
We 'll mak' a bit o' reawm for thee —
Bless thee, lad !
Tha 'rt th' prattiest brid we han i' th' nest ;
Come, hutch up closer to mi breast —
Aw 'm thi dad.

POETS OF THE NEW DAY

(HUMANITY — FREE THOUGHT — POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND ARTISTIC, REFORM)

Ebenezer Elliott

ELEGY ON WILLIAM COBBETT

O BEAR him where the rain can fall,
And where the winds can blow ;
And let the sun weep o'er his pall
As to the grave ye go !

And in some little lone churchyard,
Beside the growing corn,
Lay gentle Nature's stern prose bard,
Her mightiest peasant-born.

Yes ! let the wild-flower wed his grave,
That bees may murmur near,
When o'er his last home bend the brave,
And say — "A man lies here !"

For Britons honor Cobbett's name,
Though rashly oft he spoke ;
And none can scorn, and few will blame,
The low-laid heart of oak.

See, o'er his prostrate branches, see !
E'en factious hate consents
To reverence, in the fallen tree,
His British lineaments.

Though gnarl'd the storm-toss'd boughs that brav'd
The thunder's gather'd scowl,
Not always through his darkness rav'd
The storm-winds of the soul.

O, no ! in hours of golden calm
Morn met his forehead bold ;
And breezy evening sang her psalm
Beneath his dew-dropp'd gold.

The wren its crest of fibred fire
With his rich bronze compar'd,
While many a youngling's songful sire
His acorn'd twiglets shar'd.

The lark, above, sweet tribute paid,
Where clouds with light were riven ;
And true love sought his bluebell'd shade,
"To bless the hour of heaven."

E'en when his stormy voice was loud,
And guilt quak'd at the sound,
Beneath the frown that shook the proud
The poor a shelter found.

Dead oak ! thou livest. Thy smitten hands,
The thunder of thy brow,
Speak with strange tongues in many lands,
And tyrants hear thee, now !

Beneath the shadow of thy name,
Inspir'd by thy renown,
Shall future patriots rise to fame,
And many a sun go down.

A POET'S EPITAPH

Stop, mortal ! Here thy brother lies —
The poet of the poor.
His books were rivers, woods, and skies,
The meadow and the moor ;
His teachers were the torn heart's wail,
The tyrant and the slave,
The street, the factory, the jail,
The palace — and the grave.
Sin met thy brother everywhere !
And is thy brother blam'd ?
From passion, danger, doubt, and care,
He no exemption claim'd.
The meanest thing, earth's feeblest worm,
He fear'd to scorn or hate ;
But, honoring in a peasant's form
The equal of the great,
He bless'd the steward, whose wealth makes
The poor man's little, more ;
Yet loath'd the haughty wretch that takes
From plunder'd labor's store.
A hand to do, a head to plan,
A heart to feel and dare —
Tell man's worst foes, here lies the man
Who drew them as they are.

THE BUILDERS

Spring, summer, autumn, winter,
Come duly, as of old ;
Winds blow, suns set, and morning saith.
"Ye hills, put on your gold."

The song of Homer liveth,
Dead Solon is not dead ;
Thy splendid name, Pythagoras,
O'er realms of suns is spread.

But Babylon and Memphis
Are letters traced in dust :
Read them, earth's tyrants ! ponder well
The might in which ye trust !

They rose, while all the depths of guilt
Their vain creators sounded ;
They fell, because on fraud and force
Their corner-stones were founded.

Truth, mercy, knowledge, justice,
Are powers that ever stand ;
They build their temples in the soul,
And work with God's right hand.

William Johnson Fox

THE BARONS BOLD

The Barons bold on Runnymede
By union won their charter ;
True men were they, prepar'd to bleed,
But not their rights to barter :
And they swore that England's laws
Were above a tyrant's word ;
And they prov'd that freedom's cause
Was above a tyrant's sword :
Then honor we
The memory
Of those Barons brave united ;
And like their band,
Join hand to hand :
Our wrongs shall soon be righted.

The Commons brave, in Charles's time,
By union made the Crown fall,
And show'd the world how royal crime
Should lead to royal downfall :
And they swore that rights and laws
Were above a monarch's word ;
And they raised the nation's cause
Above the monarch's sword :
Then honor we
The memory
Of those Commons brave, united ;
And like their band,
Join hand to hand :
Our wrongs shall soon be righted.

The People firm, from Court and Peers,
By union won Reform, sirs,

And, union safe, the nation steers
  Through sunshine and through storm, sirs :
And we swear that equal laws
  Shall prevail o'er lordlings' words,
And can prove that freedom's cause
  Is too strong for hireling swords :
    Then honor we
    The victory
Of the people brave, united ;
    Let all our bands
    Join hearts and hands :
Our wrongs shall all be righted.

LIFE IS LOVE

The fair varieties of earth,
  The heavens serene and blue above,
The rippling smile of mighty seas —
  What is the charm of all, but love ?

By love they minister to thought,
  Love makes them breathe the poet's song ;
When their Creator best is prais'd,
  'T is love inspires the adoring throng.

Knowledge, and power, and will supreme,
  Are but celestial tyranny,
Till they are consecrate by love,
  The essence of divinity.

For love is strength, and faith, and hope ;
  It crowns with bliss our mortal state ;
And, glancing far beyond the grave,
  Foresees a life of endless date.

That life is love ; and all of life
  Time or eternity can prove ;
Both men and angels, worms and gods,
  Exist in universal love.

Thomas Hood

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM

'T was in the prime of summer time,
  An evening calm and cool,
And four-and-twenty happy boys
  Came bounding out of school :
There were some that ran and some that leap'd,
  Like troutlets in a pool.

Away they sped with gamesome minds,
  And souls untouch'd by sin ;
To a level mead they came, and there
  They drave the wickets in :
Pleasantly shone the setting sun
  Over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they cours'd about,
  And shouted as they ran,
Turning to mirth all things of earth,
  As only boyhood can ;
But the Usher sat remote from all,
  A melancholy man !

His hat was off, his vest apart,
  To catch heaven's blessed breeze ;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
  And his bosom ill at ease :
So he lean'd his head on his hands, and read
  The book between his knees.

Leaf after leaf, he turn'd it o'er,
  Nor ever glanced aside,
For the peace of his soul he read that book
  In the golden eventide :
Much study had made him very lean,
  And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome,
  With a fast and fervent grasp
He strain'd the dusky covers close,
  And fix'd the brazen hasp :
" Oh, God ! could I so close my mind,
  And clasp it with a clasp ! "

Then leaping on his feet upright,
  Some moody turns he took, —
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
  And past a shady nook, —
And, lo ! he saw a little boy
  That por'd upon a book.

" My gentle lad, what is 't you read —
  Romance or fairy fable ?
Or is it some historic page,
  Of kings and crowns unstable ? "
The young boy gave an upward glance, —
  " It is 'The Death of Abel.' "

The Usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain,
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again ;
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talk'd with him of Cain ;

And, long since then, of bloody men,
Whose deeds tradition saves ;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves ;
Of horrid stabs, in groves forlorn,
And murders done in caves ;

And how the sprites of injur'd men
Shriek upward from the sod ;
Aye, how the ghostly hand will point
To show the burial clod ;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God !

He told how murderers walk the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain,
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain :
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain.

"And well," quoth he, "I know, for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme, —
Woe, woe, unutterable woe, —
Who spill life's sacred stream !
For why ? Methought, last night, I wrought
A murder, in a dream !

"One that had never done me wrong,
A feeble man and old :
I led him to a lonely field ;
The moon shone clear and cold :
Now here, said I, this man shall die,
And I will have his gold !

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One hurried gash with a hasty knife, —
And then the deed was done ;
There was nothing lying at my foot
But lifeless flesh and bone !

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill ;
And yet I fear'd him all the more,
For lying there so still :
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill.

"And, lo ! the universal air
Seem'd lit with ghastly flame ;
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame :
I took the dead man by his hand,
And call'd upon his name !

"Oh, God ! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain !
But when I touch'd the lifeless clay,
The blood gush'd out amain !
For every clot, a burning spot
Was scorching in my brain !

"My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice ;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the Devil's price ;
A dozen times I groan'd : the dead
Had never groan'd but twice.

"And now, from forth the frowning sky,
From the Heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice — the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite :
'Thou guilty man ! take up thy dead
And hide it from my sight !'

"I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream,
A sluggish water, black as ink,
The depth was so extreme : —
My gentle Boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream !

"Down went the corse with hollow plunge
And vanish'd in the pool ;
Anon I cleans'd my bloody hands,
And wash'd my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young,
That evening in the school.

"Oh, Heaven ! to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim !
I could not share in childish prayer
Nor join in Evening Hymn :
Like a Devil of the Pit I seem'd,
'Mid holy Cherubim !

"And peace went with them, one and all,
And each calm pillow spread ;
But Guilt was my grim Chamberlain
That lighted me to bed,
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red !

"All night I lay in agony,
  In anguish dark and deep,
My fever'd eyes I dar'd not close,
  But star'd aghast at Sleep :
For Sin had render'd unto her
  The keys of hell to keep.

"All night I lay in agony,
  From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
  That rack'd me all the time ;
A mighty yearning like the first
  Fierce impulse unto crime ;

"One stern tyrannic thought, that made
  All other thoughts its slave :
Stronger and stronger every pulse
  Did that temptation crave,
Still urging me to go and see
  The Dead Man in his grave !

"Heavily I rose up, as soon
  As light was in the sky,
And sought the black accursed pool
  With a wild misgiving eye :
And I saw the Dead in the river bed,
  For the faithless stream was dry.

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
  The dew-drop from its wing ;
But I never mark'd its morning flight,
  I never heard it sing,
For I was stooping once again
  Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
  I took him up and ran ;
There was no time to dig a grave
  Before the day began :
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves,
  I hid the murder'd man.

"And all that day I read in school,
  But my thought was other where ;
As soon as the mid-day task was done,
  In secret I was there ;
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
  And still the corse was bare !

"Then down I cast me on my face,
  And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
  That earth refus'd to keep :
Or land or sea, though he should be
  Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"So wills the fierce avenging Sprite,
  Till blood for blood atones !
Aye, though he 's buried in a cave,
  And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh, —
  The world shall see his bones.

"Oh, God ! that horrid, horrid dream
  Besets me now awake !
Again — again, with dizzy brain,
  The human life I take ;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
  Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay
  Will wave or mould allow ;
The horrid thing pursues my soul, —
  It stands before me now !"
The fearful Boy look'd up, and saw
  Huge drops upon his brow.

That very night, while gentle sleep
  The urchin eyelids kiss'd,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
  Through the cold and heavy mist ;
And Eugene Aram walk'd between,
  With gyves upon his wrist.

FLOWERS

I WILL not have the mad Clytie,
Whose head is turn'd by the sun ;
The tulip is a courtly quean,
Whom, therefore I will shun ;
The cowslip is a country wench,
The violet is a nun ;
But I will woo the dainty rose,
The queen of every one.

The pea is but a wanton witch,
In too much haste to wed,
And clasps her rings on every hand ;
The wolfsbane I should dread ;
Nor will I dreary rosemarye,
That always mourns the dead ;
But I will woo the dainty rose,
With her cheeks of tender red.

The lily is all in white, like a saint,
And so is no mate for me,
And the daisy's cheek is tipp'd with a blush,
She is of such low degree ;

Jasmine is sweet, and has many loves,
And the broom 's betroth'd to the bee ;
But I will plight with the dainty rose,
For fairest of all is she.

FAIR INES

O saw ye not fair Ines ?
She 's gone into the West,
To dazzle when the sun is down,
And rob the world of rest :
She took our daylight with her,
The smiles that we love best,
With morning blushes on her cheek,
And pearls upon her breast.

O turn again, fair Ines,
Before the fall of night,
For fear the Moon should shine alone,
And stars unrivall'd bright ;
And blessed will the lover be
That walks beneath their light,
And breathes the love against thy cheek
I dare not even write.

Would I had been, fair Ines,
That gallant cavalier
Who rode so gayly by thy side,
And whisper'd thee so near !
Were there no bonny dames at home,
Or no true lovers here,
That he should cross the seas to win
The dearest of the dear ?

I saw thee, lovely Ines,
Descend along the shore,
With bands of noble gentlemen,
And banners wav'd before ;
And gentle youth and maidens gay,
And snowy plumes they wore ; —
It would have been a beauteous dream, —
If it had been no more !

Alas, alas, fair Ines,
She went away with song,
With Music waiting on her steps,
And shoutings of the throng ;
But some were sad, and felt no mirth,
But only Music's wrong,
In sounds that sang Farewell, Farewell,
To her you 've lov'd so long.

Farewell, farewell, fair Ines !
That vessel never bore
So fair a lady on its deck,
Nor danced so light before :
Alas for pleasure on the sea,
And sorrow on the shore !
The smile that bless'd one lover's heart
Has broken many more !

THE DEATH-BED

We watch'd her breathing thro' the night,
  Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
  Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seem'd to speak,
  So slowly mov'd about,
As we had lent her half our powers
  To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
  Our fears our hopes belied —
We thought her dying when she slept,
  And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
  And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids clos'd — she had
  Another morn than ours.

BALLAD

It was not in the winter
Our loving lot was cast ;
It was the time of roses,
We pluck'd them as we pass'd.

That churlish season never frown'd
On early lovers yet :
Oh, no — the world was newly crown'd
With flowers when first we met !

'T was twilight, and I bade you go,
But still you held me fast ;
It was the time of roses,
We pluck'd them as we pass'd.

What else could peer thy glowing cheek,
That tears began to stud ?
And when I ask'd the like of Love,
You snatch'd a damask bud ;

And op'd it to the dainty core,
Still glowing to the last.
It was the time of roses,
We pluck'd them as we pass'd.

LEAR

A POOR old king with sorrow for my crown,
Thron'd upon straw, and mantled with the wind —
For pity, my own tears have made me blind
That I might never see my children's frown ;
And maybe madness like a friend has thrown
A folded fillet over my dark mind,
So that unkindly speech may sound for kind, —
Albeit I know not. — I am childish grown,
And have not gold to purchase wit withal,
I that have once maintain'd most royal state,
A very bankrupt now that may not call
My child, my child — all-beggar'd save in tears,
Wherewith I daily weep an old man's fate,
Foolish — and blind — and overcome with years !

BALLAD

SPRING it is cheery,
Winter is dreary,
Green leaves hang, but the brown must fly ;
When he 's forsaken,
Wither'd and shaken,
What can an old man do but die ?

Love will not clip him,
Maids will not lip him,
Maud and Marian pass him by ;
Youth it is sunny,
Age has no honey,
What can an old man do but die ?

June it was jolly,
O for its folly !
A dancing leg and a laughing eye ;
Youth may be silly,
Wisdom is chilly,
What can an old man do but die ?

Friends they are scanty,
Beggars are plenty,
If he has followers, I know why ;
Gold 's in his clutches,
(Buying him crutches !)
What can an old man do but die ?

FROM "MISS KILMANSEGG AND HER PRECIOUS LEG"

HER DEATH

'T IS a stern and startling thing to think
How often mortality stands on the brink
Of its grave without any misgiving :
And yet in this slippery world of strife,
In the stir of human bustle so rife,
There are daily sounds to tell us that Life
Is dying, and Death is living !

Ay, Beauty the Girl, and Love the Boy,
Bright as they are with hope and joy,
How their souls would sadden instanter,
To remember that one of those wedding bells,
Which ring so merrily through the dells,
Is the same that knells
Our last farewells,
Only broken into a canter !

But breath and blood set doom at nought :
How little the wretched Countess thought,
When at night she unloos'd her sandal,
That the Fates had woven her burial cloth,
And that Death, in the shape of a Death's Head Moth,
Was fluttering round her candle !

As she look'd at her clock of or-molu,
For the hours she had gone so wearily through
At the end of a day of trial,
How little she saw in her pride of prime
The dart of Death in the Hand of Time —
That hand which mov'd on the dial !

As she went with her taper up the stair,
How little her swollen eye was aware
That the Shadow which follow'd was double !
Or when she clos'd her chamber door,
It was shutting out, and for evermore,
The world — and its worldly trouble.

Little she dreamt, as she laid aside
Her jewels, after one glance of pride,
They were solemn bequests to Vanity ;
Or when her robes she began to doff
That she stood so near to the putting off
Of the flesh that clothes humanity.

And when she quench'd the taper's light,
How little she thought, as the smoke took flight,
That her day was done — and merged in a night
Of dreams and durations uncertain,
Or, along with her own,
That a Hand of Bone
Was closing mortality's curtain!

But life is sweet, and mortality blind,
And youth is hopeful, and Fate is kind
In concealing the day of sorrow;
And enough is the present tense of toil,
For this world is to all a stiffish soil,
And the mind flies back with a glad recoil
From the debts not due till to-morrow.

Wherefore else does the spirit fly
And bids its daily cares good-bye,
Along with its daily clothing?
Just as the felon condemn'd to die,
With a very natural loathing,
Leaving the Sheriff to dream of ropes,
From his gloomy cell in a vision elopes
To caper on sunny greens and slopes,
Instead of the dance upon nothing.

Thus, even thus, the Countess slept,
While Death still nearer and nearer crept,
Like the Thane who smote the sleeping;
But her mind was busy with early joys,
Her golden treasures and golden toys,
That flash'd a bright
And golden light
Under lids still red with weeping.

The golden doll that she used to hug!
Her coral of gold, and the golden mug!
Her godfather's golden presents!
The golden service she had at her meals,
The golden watch, and chain, and seals,
Her golden scissors, and thread, and reels,
And her golden fishes and pheasants!

The golden guineas in silken purse,
And the Golden Legends she heard from her nurse,
Of the Mayor in his gilded carriage,
And London streets that were pav'd with gold,
And the Golden Eggs that were laid of old,
With each golden thing
To the golden ring
At her own auriferous Marriage!

And still the golden light of the sun
Through her golden dream appear'd to run,
Though the night that roar'd without was one
To terrify seamen or gypsies,
While the moon, as if in malicious mirth,
Kept peeping down at the ruffled earth,
As though she enjoy'd the tempest's birth,
In revenge of her old eclipses.

But vainly, vainly, the thunder fell,
For the soul of the Sleeper was under a spell
That time had lately embitter'd:
The Count, as once at her foot he knelt —
That foot which now he wanted to melt!
But — hush! — 't was a stir at her pillow she felt,
And some object before her glitter'd.

'T was the Golden Leg! — she knew its gleam!
And up she started, and tried to scream, —
But, ev'n in the moment she started,
Down came the limb with a frightful smash,
And, lost in the universal flash
That her eyeballs made at so mortal a crash,
The Spark, call'd Vital, departed!

. . . . . .

Gold, still gold! hard, yellow, and cold,
For gold she had liv'd, and she died for gold,
By a golden weapon — not oaken;
In the morning they found her all alone —
Stiff, and bloody, and cold as stone —
But her Leg, the Golden Leg, was gone,
And the "Golden Bowl was broken!"

Gold — still gold! it haunted her yet:
At the Golden Lion the Inquest met —
Its foreman a carver and gilder,
And the Jury debated from twelve till three
What the Verdict ought to be,
And they brought it in as Felo-de-Se,
"Because her own Leg had kill'd her!"

HER MORAL

Gold! Gold! Gold! Gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammer'd, and roll'd;
Heavy to get, and light to hold;
Hoarded, barter'd, bought, and sold,
Stolen, borrow'd, squander'd, doled:
Spurn'd by the young, but hugg'd by the old
To the very verge of the churchyard mould;

Price of many a crime untold ;
Gold ! Gold ! Gold ! Gold !
Good or bad a thousand-fold !
How widely its agencies vary :
To save — to ruin — to curse — to bless —
As even its minted coins express,
Now stamp'd with the image of Good Queen Bess,
And now of a bloody Mary.

RUTH

She stood breast high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripen'd ; — such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veil'd a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim ;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks :

Sure, I said, heav'n did not mean
Where I reap thou shouldst but glean,
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

THE WATER LADY

Alas, the moon should ever beam
To show what man should never see !
I saw a maiden on a stream,
And fair was she !

I stayed awhile, to see her throw
Her tresses back, that all beset
The fair horizon of her brow
With clouds of jet.

I stayed a little while to view
Her cheek, that wore in place of red
The bloom of water, tender blue,
Daintily spread.

I stayed to watch, a little space,
Her parted lips if she would sing ;
The waters clos'd above her face
With many a ring.

And still I stayed a little more :
Alas, she never comes again !
I throw my flowers from the shore,
And watch in vain.

I know my life will fade away,
I know that I must vainly pine,
For I am made of mortal clay,
But she 's divine !

ODE

AUTUMN

I

I saw old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless, like silence, listening
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn ; —
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

II

Where are the songs of Summer ? — With the sun,
Oping the dusky eyelids of the south,
Till shade and silence waken up as one,
And Morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.
Where are the merry birds ? —Away, away,
On panting wings through the inclement skies,
Lest owls should prey
Undazzled at noon-day,
And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

III

Where are the blooms of Summer ? — In the west,
Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
When the mild Eve by sudden Night is prest
Like tearful Proserpine, snatch'd from her flow'rs
To a most gloomy breast.

Where is the pride of Summer, — the green prime, —
The many, many leaves all twinkling? — Three
On the moss'd elm; three on the naked lime
Trembling, — and one upon the old oak tree!
Where is the Dryad's immortality? —
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,
Or wearing the long gloomy Winter through
In the smooth holly's green eternity.

IV

The squirrel gloats on his accomplish'd hoard,
The ants have brimm'd their garners with ripe grain,
And honey bees have stor'd
The sweets of Summer in their luscious cells;
The swallows all have wing'd across the main;
But here the Autumn melancholy dwells,
And sighs her tearful spells
Amongst the sunless shadows of the plain.
Alone, alone,
Upon a mossy stone,
She sits and reckons up the dead and gone
With the last leaves for a love-rosary,
Whilst all the wither'd world looks drearily,
Like a dim picture of the drowned past
In the hush'd mind's mysterious far away,
Doubtful what ghostly thing will steal the last
Into that distance, gray upon the gray.

V

O go and sit with her, and be o'ershaded
Under the languid downfall of her hair:
She wears a coronal of flowers faded
Upon her forehead, and a face of care; —
There is enough of wither'd everywhere
To make her bower, — and enough of gloom;
There is enough of sadness to invite,
If only for the rose that died, — whose doom
Is Beauty's, — she that with the living bloom
Of conscious cheeks most beautifies the light; —
There is enough of sorrowing, and quite
Enough of bitter fruits the earth doth bear, —
Enough of chilly droppings for her bowl;
Enough of fear and shadowy despair,
To frame her cloudy prison for the soul!

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"Work! work! work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work — work — work,
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It 's Oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work — work — work
Till the brain begins to swim;
Work — work — work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim.
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

"Oh, Men, with Sisters dear!
Oh, Men, with Mothers and Wives!
It is not linen you 're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch — stitch — stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A Shroud as well as a Shirt.

"But why do I talk of Death?
That Phantom of grisly bone,
I hardly fear his terrible shape,
It seems so like my own —
It seems so like my own,
Because of the fasts I keep;
Oh, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work — work — work !
My labor never flags ;
And what are its wages ? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread — and rags.
That shatter'd roof — and this naked floor —
A table — a broken chair —
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there.

"Work — work — work !
From weary chime to chime,
Work — work — work —
As prisoners work for crime !
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumb'd,
As well as the weary hand.

"Work — work — work,
In the dull December light,
And work — work — work,
When the weather is warm and bright,
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling
As if to show me their sunny backs
And twit me with the spring.

"Oh ! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet,
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet,
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal,

"Oh, but for one short hour !
A respite however brief !
No blessed leisure for Love or Hope,
But only time for Grief !
A little weeping would ease my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread ! "

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch ! stitch ! stitch !
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,
Would that its tone could reach the Rich !
She sang this "Song of the Shirt ! "

THE LAY OF THE LABORER

A SPADE ! a rake ! a hoe !
A pickaxe, or a bill !
A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
A flail, or what ye will,
And here 's a ready hand
To ply the needful tool,
And skill'd enough, by lessons rough,
In Labor's rugged school.

To hedge, or dig the ditch,
To lop or fell the tree,
To lay the swarth on the sultry field,
Or plough the stubborn lea ;
The harvest stack to bind,
The wheaten rick to thatch,
And never fear in my pouch to find
The tinder or the match.

To a flaming barn or farm
My fancies never roam ;
The fire I yearn to kindle and burn
Is on the hearth of Home ;
Where children huddle and crouch
Through dark long winter days,
Where starving children huddle and crouch,
To see the cheerful rays
A-glowing on the haggard cheek,
And not in the haggard's blaze !

To Him who sends a drought
To parch the fields forlorn,
The rain to flood the meadows with mud,
The blight to blast the corn,
To Him I leave to guide
The bolt in its crooked path,
To strike the miser's rick, and show
The skies blood-red with wrath.

A spade ! a rake ! a hoe !
A pickaxe, or a bill !
A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
A flail, or what ye will ;
The corn to thrash, or the hedge to plash,
The market-team to drive,
Or mend the fence by the cover side,
And leave the game alive.

Ay, only give me work,
And then you need not fear
That I shall snare his worship's hare,
Or kill his grace's deer ;
Break into his lordship's house,
To steal the plate so rich ;

Or leave the yeoman that had a purse
  To welter in a ditch.

Wherever Nature needs,
  Wherever Labor calls,
No job I 'll shirk of the hardest work,
  To shun the workhouse walls ;
Where savage laws begrudge
  The pauper babe its breath,
And doom a wife to a widow's life,
  Before her partner's death.

My only claim is this,
  With labor stiff and stark,
By lawful turn my living to earn
  Between the light and dark ;
My daily bread, and nightly bed,
  My bacon and drop of beer —
But all from the hand that holds the land,
  And none from the overseer !

No parish money, or loaf,
  No pauper badges for me,
A son of the soil, by right of toil
  Entitled to my fee.
No alms I ask, give me my task :
  Here are the arm, the leg,
The strength, the sinews of a Man,
  To work, and not to beg.

Still one of Adam's heirs,
  Though doom'd by chance of birth
To dress so mean, and to eat the lean
  Instead of the fat of the earth ;
To make such humble meals
  As honest labor can,
A bone and a crust, with a grace to God,
  And little thanks to man !

A spade ! a rake ! a hoe !
  A pickaxe, or a bill !
A hook to reap, or a scythe to mow,
  A flail, or what ye will ;
Whatever the tool to ply,
  Here is a willing drudge,
With muscle and limb, and woe to him
  Who does their pay begrudge !

Who every weekly score
  Docks labor's little mite,
Bestows on the poor at the temple-door,
  But robb'd them over night.
The very shilling he hop'd to save,
  As health and morals fail,
Shall visit me in the New Bastile,
  The Spital or the Gaol !

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS

One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death !

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care ;
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair !

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements ;
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing ;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully ;
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly ;
Not of the stains of her,
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny
Rash and undutiful :
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb,
Her fair auburn tresses ;
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home ?

Who was her father ?
Who was her mother ?
Had she a sister ?
Had she a brother ?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other ?

Alas ! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun !
Oh ! it was pitiful !

Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed :
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence ;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver,
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river ;
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurl'd —
Any where, any where
Out of the world !

In she plunged boldly,
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran, —
Over the brink of it,
Picture it — think of it,
Dissolute Man !
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can !

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care ;
Fashion'd so slenderly,
Young, and so fair !

Ere her limbs frigidly
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them ;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly !

Dreadfully staring
Thro' muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fix'd on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurr'd by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest,
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast.

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour !

STANZAS

Farewell, Life ! my senses swim,
And the world is growing dim ;
Thronging shadows cloud the light,
Like the advent of the night ;
Colder, colder, colder still,
Upward steals a vapor chill ;
Strong the earthy odor grows —
I smell the mould above the rose !

Welcome, Life ! the Spirit strives !
Strength returns and hope revives ;
Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn
Fly like shadows at the morn ;
O'er the earth there comes a bloom ;
Sunny light for sullen gloom,
Warm perfume for vapor cold —
I smell the rose above the mould !

Bartholomew Simmons

STANZAS TO THE MEMORY OF THOMAS HOOD

Take back into thy bosom, earth,
This joyous, May-eyed morrow,
The gentlest child that ever mirth
Gave to be rear'd by sorrow !
'T is hard — while rays half green, half gold,
Through vernal bowers are burning,

And streams their diamond-mirrors hold
  To summer's face returning —
To say we 're thankful that his sleep
  Shall never more be lighter,
In whose sweet-tongued companionship
  Stream, bower, and beam grew brighter !

But all the more intensely true
  His soul gave out each feature
Of elemental love — each hue
  And grace of golden nature ;
The deeper still beneath it all
  Lurk'd the keen jags of anguish ;
The more the laurels clasp'd his brow
  Their poison made it languish.
Seem'd it that like the nightingale
  Of his own mournful singing,
The tenderer would his song prevail
  While most the thorn was stinging.

So never to the desert-worn
  Did fount bring freshness deeper,
Than that his placid rest this morn
  Has brought the shrouded sleeper.
That rest may lap his weary head
  Where charnels choke the city,
Or where, mid woodlands, by his bed
  The wren shall wake its ditty ;
But near or far, while evening's star
  Is dear to hearts regretting,
Around that spot admiring thought
  Shall hover, unforgetting.

And if this sentient, seething world
  Is, after all, ideal,
Or in the immaterial furl'd
  Alone resides the real,
Freed one ! there 's a wail for thee this hour
  Through thy lov'd elves' dominions ;
Hush'd is each tiny trumpet-flower,
  And droopeth Ariel's pinions ;
Even Puck, dejected, leaves his swing,
  To plan, with fond endeavor,
What pretty buds and dews shall keep
  Thy pillow bright for ever.

And higher, if less happy, tribes,
  The race of early childhood,
Shall miss thy whims of frolic wit,
  That in the summer wild-wood,
Or by the Christmas hearth, were hail'd,
  And hoarded as a treasure
Of undecaying merriment
  And ever-changing pleasure.
Things from thy lavish humor flung
  Profuse as scents, are flying
This kindling morn, when blooms are born
  As fast as blooms are dying.

Sublimer art owned thy control :
  The minstrel's mightiest magic,
With sadness to subdue the soul,
  Or thrill it with the tragic.
Now listening Aram's fearful dream,
  We see beneath the willow
That dreadful thing, or watch him steal,
  Guilt-lighted, to his pillow.
Now with thee roaming ancient groves,
  We watch the woodman felling
The funeral elm, while through its boughs
  The ghostly wind comes knelling.

Dear worshipper of Dian's face
  In solitary places,
Shalt thou no more steal, as of yore,
  To meet her white embraces ?
Is there no purple in the rose
  Henceforward to thy senses ?
For thee have dawn and daylight's close
  Lost their sweet influences ?
No ! — by the mental night untam'd
  Thou took'st to death's dark portal,
The joy of the wide universe
  Is now to thee immortal !

How fierce contrasts the city's roar
  With thy new-conquer'd quiet ! —
This stunning hell of wheels that pour
  With princes to their riot !
Loud clash the crowds — the busy clouds
  With thunder-noise are shaken,
While pale, and mute, and cold, afar
  Thou liest, men-forsaken.
Hot life reeks on, nor recks that one —
  The playful, human-hearted —
Who lent its clay less earthiness,
  Is just from earth departed.

Harriet Martineau

ON, ON, FOREVER

Beneath this starry arch
Nought resteth or is still;
But all things hold their march,
As if by one great will:
Moves one, move all: hark to the foot-fall!
On, on, forever!

Yon sheaves were once but seed;
Will ripens into deed;
As cave-drops swell the streams,
Day-thoughts feed nightly dreams;
And sorrow tracketh wrong,
As echo follows song:
On, on, forever!

By night, like stars on high,
The Hours reveal their train;
They whisper and go by:
I never watch in vain.
Moves one, move all: hark to the foot-fall!
On, on, forever!

They pass the cradle-head,
And there a promise shed;
They pass the moist new grave,
And bid rank verdure wave;
They bear through every clime
The harvests of all time.
On, on, forever!

Laman Blanchard

NELL GWYNNE'S LOOKING-GLASS

Glass antique, 'twixt thee and Nell
Draw we here a parallel.
She, like thee, was forced to bear
All reflections, foul or fair.
Thou art deep and bright within,
Depths as bright belong'd to Gwynne;
Thou art very frail as well,
Frail as flesh is, — so was Nell.

Thou, her glass, art silver-lin'd,
She too, had a silver mind:
Thine is fresh till this far day,
Hers till death ne'er wore away:
Thou dost to thy surface win
Wandering glances, so did Gwynne;
Eyes on thee long love to dwell,
So men's eyes would do on Nell.

Life-like forms in thee are sought,
Such the forms the actress wrought;
Truth unfailing rests in you,
Nell, whate'er she was, was true.
Clear as virtue, dull as sin,
Thou art oft, as oft was Gwynne;
Breathe on thee, and drops will swell:
Bright tears dimm'd the eyes of Nell.

Thine 's a frame to charm the sight,
Fram'd was she to give delight,
Waxen forms here truly show
Charles above and Nell below;
But between them, chin with chin,
Stuart stands as low as Gwynne, —
Paired, yet parted, — meant to tell
Charles was opposite to Nell.

Round the glass wherein her face
Smil'd so oft, her "arms" we trace;
Thou, her mirror, hast the pair,
Lion here, and leopard there.
She had part in these, — akin
To the lion-heart was Gwynne;
And the leopard's beauty fell
With its spots to bounding Nell.

Oft inspected, ne'er seen through,
Thou art firm, if brittle too;
So her will, on good intent,
Might be broken, never bent.
What the glass was, when therein
Beam'd the face of glad Nell Gwynne,
Was that face by beauty's spell
To the honest soul of Nell.

HIDDEN JOYS

PLEASURES lie thickest where no pleasures seem :
There 's not a leaf that falls upon the ground
But holds some joy, of silence, or of sound,
Some sprite begotten of a summer dream.
The very meanest things are made supreme
With innate ecstacy. No grain of sand
But moves a bright and million-peopled land,
And hath its Edens and its Eves, I deem.
For Love, though blind himself, a curious eye
Hath lent me, to behold the hearts of things,
And touch'd mine ear with power. Thus, far or nigh,
Minute or mighty, fix'd or free with wings,
Delight from many a nameless covert sly
Peeps sparkling, and in tones familiar sings.

Thomas Wade

THE NET-BRAIDERS

WITHIN a low-thatch'd hut, built in a lane
Whose narrow pathway tendeth toward the ocean,
A solitude which, save of some rude swain
Or fisherman, doth scarce know human motion —
Or of some silent poet, to the main
Straying, to offer infinite devotion
To God, in the free universe — there dwelt
Two women old, to whom small store was dealt

Of the world's misnam'd good : mother and child,
Both aged and mateless. These two life sustain'd
By braiding fishing-nets ; and so beguil'd
Time and their cares, and little e'er complain'd
Of Fate or Providence : resign'd and mild,
Whilst day by day, for years, their hour-glass rain'd
Its trickling sand, to track the wing of time,
They toil'd in peace ; and much there was sublime

In their obscure contentment : of mankind
They little knew, or reck'd ; but for their being
They bless'd their Maker, with a simple mind ;
And in the constant gaze of his all-seeing
Eye, to his poorest creatures never blind,
Deeming they dwelt, they bore their sorrows fleeing,
Glad still to live, but not afraid to die,
In calm expectance of Eternity.

And since I first did greet those braiders poor,
If ever I behold fair women's cheeks
Sin-pale in stately mansions, where the door
Is shut to all but pride, my cleft heart seeks
For refuge in my thoughts, which then explore
That pathway lone near which the wild sea breaks,
And to Imagination's humble eyes
That hut, with all its want, is Paradise !

BIRTH AND DEATH

METHINKS the soul within the body held
Is as a little babe within the womb,
Which flutters in its antenatal tomb,
But stirs and heaves the prison where 't is cell'd,
And struggles in strange darkness, undispell'd
By all its strivings towards the breath and bloom
Of that aurorean being soon to come —
Strivings of feebleness, by nothing quell'd :
And even as birth to the enfranchis'd child,
Which shows to its sweet senses all the vast
Of beauty visible and audible,
Is death unto the spirit undefil'd ;
Setting it free of limit, and the past,
And all that in its prison-house befell.

Thomas Cooper

CHARTIST SONG

The time shall come when wrong shall end,
When peasant to peer no more shall bend ;
When the lordly Few shall lose their sway,
And the Many no more their frown obey.
Toil, brothers, toil, till the work is done,
Till the struggle is o'er, and the Charter won !

The time shall come when the artisan
Shall homage no more the titled man ;
When the moiling men who delve the mine
By Mammon's decree no more shall pine.
Toil, brothers, toil, till the work is done,
Till the struggle is o'er, and the Charter won.

The time shall come when the weavers' band
Shall hunger no more in their fatherland ;
When the factory-child can sleep till day,
And smile while it dreams of sport and play.
Toil, brothers, toil, till the work is done,
Till the struggle is o'er, and the Charter won.

The time shall come when Man shall hold
His brother more dear than sordid gold ;
When the negro's stain his freeborn mind
Shall sever no more from human-kind.
Toil, brothers, toil, till the world is free,
Till Justice and Love hold jubilee.

The time shall come when kingly crown
And mitre for toys of the past are shown ;
When the fierce and false alike shall fall,
And mercy and truth encircle all.
Toil, brothers, toil, till the world is free,
Till Mercy and Truth hold jubilee !

The time shall come when earth shall be
A garden of joy, from sea to sea,
When the slaughterous sword is drawn no more,
And goodness exults from shore to shore.
Toil, brothers, toil, till the world is free,
Till goodness shall hold high jubilee !

Sarah Flower Adams

HYMN

He sendeth sun, he sendeth shower,
Alike they're needful for the flower :
And joys and tears alike are sent
To give the soul fit nourishment.
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father ! thy will, not mine, be done !

Can loving children e'er reprove
With murmurs whom they trust and love ?
Creator ! I would ever be
A trusting, loving child to thee :
As comes to me or cloud or sun,
Father ! thy will, not mine, be done !

Oh, ne'er will I at life repine :
Enough that thou hast made it mine.
When falls the shadow cold of death
I yet will sing, with parting breath,
As comes to me or shade or sun,
Father ! thy will, not mine, be done !

LOVE

O Love ! thou makest all things even
In earth or heaven ;
Finding thy way through prison-bars
Up to the stars ;
Or, true to the Almighty plan,
That out of dust created man,
Thou lookest in a grave, — to see
Thine immortality !

NEARER TO THEE

Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee !
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me ;
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee !

Though like the wanderer,
The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone ;
Yet in my dreams I 'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee !

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven ;
All that thou send'st to me
In mercy given ;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee !

Then, with my waking thoughts
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I 'll raise ;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee !

Or if on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upward I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee !

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,
Ere the sorrow comes with years ?
They are leaning their young heads against their mothers,
And *that* cannot stop their tears.
The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,
The young birds are chirping in the nest,
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,
The young flowers are blowing toward the west :
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
They are weeping bitterly !
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,
In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in the sorrow
Why their tears are falling so ?
The old man may weep for his to-morrow
Which is lost in Long Ago ;
The old tree is leafless in the forest,
The old year is ending in the frost,
The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,
The old hope is hardest to be lost :
But the young, young children, O my brothers,
Do you ask them why they stand
Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,
In our happy Fatherland ?

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their looks are sad to see,
For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses
Down the cheeks of infancy ;
"Your old earth," they say, "is very dreary,
Our young feet," they say, "are very weak ;
Few paces have we taken, yet are weary —
Our grave-rest is very far to seek :
Ask the aged why they weep, and not the children,
For the outside earth is cold,
And we young ones stand without, in our bewildering,
And the graves are for the old."

"True," say the children, "it may happen
That we die before our time :
Little Alice died last year, her grave is shapen
Like a snowball, in the rime.
We looked into the pit prepared to take her :
Was no room for any work in the close clay !
From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake her,
Crying, 'Get up, little Alice ! it is day.'

If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,
With your ear down, little Alice never cries:
Could we see her face, be sure we should not know her,
For the smile has time for growing in her eyes:
And merry go her moments, lull'd and still'd in
The shroud by the kirk-chime.
It is good when it happens," say the children,
"That we die before our time."

Alas, alas, the children! they are seeking
Death in life, as best to have:
They are binding up their hearts away from breaking,
With a cerement from the grave.
Go out, children, from the mine and from the city,
Sing out, children, as the little thrushes do;
Pluck your handfuls of the meadow-cowslips pretty,
Laugh aloud, to feel your fingers let them through!
But they answer, "Are your cowslips of the meadows
Like our weeds anear the mine?
Leave us quiet in the dark of the coal-shadows,
From your pleasures fair and fine!

"For oh," say the children, "we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap;
If we car'd for any meadows, it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping,
We fall upon our faces, trying to go;
And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,
The reddest flower would look as pale as snow.
For, all day, we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark, underground,
Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories, round and round.

"For all day, the wheels are droning, turning;
Their wind comes in our faces,
Till our hearts turn, our heads with pulses burning,
And the walls turn in their places:
Turns the sky in the high window blank and reeling,
Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling,
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.
And all day, the iron wheels are droning,
And sometimes we could pray,
'O ye wheels,' (breaking out in a mad moaning)
'Stop! be silent for to-day!'"

Ay, be silent! Let them hear each other breathing
For a moment, mouth to mouth!
Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh wreathing
Of their tender human youth!
Let them feel that this cold metallic motion
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals:
Let them prove their living souls against the notion
That they live in you, or under you, O wheels!
Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark.

Now tell the poor young children, O my brothers,
To look up to Him and pray;
So the blessed One who blesseth all the others,
Will bless them another day.
They answer, "Who is God that He should hear us,
While the rushing of the iron wheels is stirr'd?
When we sob aloud, the human creatures near us
Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word.
And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their resounding)
Strangers speaking at the door:
Is it likely God, with angels singing round Him,
Hears our weeping any more?

"Two words, indeed, of praying we remember,
And at midnight's hour of harm,

'Our Father,' looking upward in the chamber,
We say softly for a charm.
We know no other words except 'Our Father,'
And we think that, in some pause of angels' song,
God may pluck them with the silence sweet to gather,
And hold both within His right hand which is strong.
'Our Father!' If He heard us, He would surely
(For they call Him good and mild)
Answer, smiling down the steep world very purely,
'Come and rest with me, my child.'

"But, no!" say the children, weeping faster,
"He is speechless as a stone:
And they tell us, of His image is the master
Who commands us to work on.
Go to!" say the children, — "up in heaven,
Dark, wheel-like, turning clouds are all we find.
Do not mock us; grief has made us unbelieving:
We look up for God, but tears have made us blind."
Do you hear the children weeping and disproving,
O my brothers, what ye preach?
For God's possible is taught by His world's loving,
And the children doubt of each.

And well may the children weep before you!
They are weary ere they run;
They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
Which is brighter than the sun.
They know the grief of man, without its wisdom;
They sink in man's despair, without its calm;
Are slaves, without the liberty in Christdom,
Are martyrs, by the pang without the palm:
Are worn as if with age, yet unretrievingly
The harvest of its memories cannot reap, —
Are orphans of the earthly love and heavenly.
Let them weep! let them weep!

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For they mind you of their angels in high places,
With eyes turned on Deity.
"How long," they say, "how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's heart, —
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?
Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,
And your purple shows your path!
But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper
Than the strong man in his wrath."

MY HEART AND I

Enough! we're tired, my heart and I.
We sit beside the headstone thus,
And wish that name were carv'd for us.
The moss reprints more tenderly
The hard types of the mason's knife,
As Heaven's sweet life renews earth's life
With which we're tired, my heart and I.

You see we're tired, my heart and I.
We dealt with books, we trusted men,
And in our own blood drench'd the pen,
As if such colors could not fly.
We walk'd too straight for fortune's end,
We lov'd too true to keep a friend;
At last we're tired, my heart and I.

How tired we feel, my heart and I!
We seem of no use in the world;
Our fancies hang gray and uncurl'd
About men's eyes indifferently;
Our voice which thrill'd you so, will let
You sleep; our tears are only wet:
What do we here, my heart and I?

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
It was not thus in that old time
When Ralph sat with me 'neath the lime
To watch the sunset from the sky.
"Dear love, you're looking tired," he said:
I, smiling at him, shook my head.
'T is now we're tired, my heart and I.

So tired, so tired, my heart and I!
  Though now none takes me on his arm
  To fold me close and kiss me warm
Till each quick breath end in a sigh
  Of happy languor. Now, alone,
  We lean upon this graveyard stone,
Uncheer'd, unkiss'd, my heart and I.

Tired out we are, my heart and I.
  Suppose the world brought diadems
  To tempt us, crusted with loose gems
Of powers and pleasures? Let it try.
  We scarcely care to look at even
  A pretty child, or God's blue heaven,
We feel so tired, my heart and I.

Yet who complains? My heart and I?
  In this abundant earth no doubt
  Is little room for things worn out:
Disdain them, break them, throw them by!
  And if before the days grew rough
  We *once* were lov'd, us'd, — well enough,
I think, we've far'd, my heart and I.

SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE

I

I THOUGHT once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wish'd-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mus'd it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove, —
"Guess now who holds thee!" — "Death," I said. But, there,
The silver answer rang — "Not Death, but Love."

IV

THOU hast thy calling to some palace-floor,
Most gracious singer of high poems! where
The dancers will break footing, from the care
Of watching up thy pregnant lips for more.
And dost thou lift this house's latch too poor
For hand of thine? and canst thou think and bear
To let thy music drop here unaware
In folds of golden fulness at my door?
Look up and see the casement broken in,
The bats and owlets builders in the roof!
My cricket chirps against thy mandolin.
Hush, call no echo up in further proof
Of desolation! there's a voice within
That weeps . . . as thou must sing . . . alone, aloof.

V

I LIFT my heavy heart up solemnly,
As once Electra her sepulchral urn,
And, looking in thine eyes, I overturn
The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see
What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,
And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn
Through the ashen grayness. If thy foot in scorn
Could tread them out to darkness utterly,
It might be well perhaps. But if instead
Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow
The gray dust up, . . . those laurels on thine head,
O my Beloved, will not shield thee so,
That none of all the fires shall scorch and shred
The hair beneath. Stand further off then! go!

VI

Go from me. Yet I feel that I shall stand
Henceforward in thy shadow. Nevermore
Alone upon the threshold of my door
Of individual life, I shall command
The uses of my soul, nor lift my hand
Serenely in the sunshine as before,
Without the sense of that which I forebore —
Thy touch upon the palm. The widest land
Doom takes to part us, leaves thy heart in mine
With pulses that beat double. What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes. And when I sue
God for myself, He hears that name of thine,
And sees within my eyes the tears of two.

IX

CAN it be right to give what I can give ?
To let thee sit beneath the fall of tears
As salt as mine, and hear the sighing years
Re-sighing on my lips renunciative
Through those infrequent smiles which fail to live
For all thy adjurations ? O my fears,
That this can scarce be right ! We are not peers
So to be lovers ; and I own, and grieve,
That givers of such gifts as mine are, must
Be counted with the ungenerous. Out, alas !
I will not soil thy purple with my dust,
Nor breathe my poison on thy Venice-glass,
Nor give thee any love — which were unjust.
Beloved, I only love thee ! let it pass.

XVIII

I NEVER gave a lock of hair away
To a man, Dearest, except this to thee,
Which now upon my fingers thoughtfully
I ring out to the full brown length and say
"Take it." My day of youth went yesterday ;
My hair no longer bounds to my foot's glee,
Nor plant I it from rose or myrtle-tree,
As girls do, any more : it only may
Now shade on two pale cheeks the mark of tears,
Taught drooping from the head that hangs aside
Through sorrow's trick. I thought the funeral-shears
Would take this first, but Love is justified, —
Take it thou, — finding pure, from all those years,
The kiss my mother left here when she died.

XX

BELOVED, my Beloved, when I think
That thou wast in the world a year ago,
What time I sat alone here in the snow
And saw no footprint, heard the silence sink
No moment at thy voice, but, link by link,
Went counting all my chains as if that so
They never could fall off at any blow
Struck by thy possible hand, — why, thus I drink
Of life's great cup of wonder ! Wonderful,
Never to feel thee thrill the day or night
With personal act or speech, — nor ever cull
Some prescience of thee with the blossoms white
Thou sawest growing ! Atheists are as dull,
Who cannot guess God's presence out of sight.

XXII

WHEN our two souls stand up erect and strong,
Face to face, silent, drawing nigh and nigher,
Until the lengthening wings break into fire
At either curved point, — what bitter wrong
Can the earth do to us, that we should not long
Be here contented ? Think ! In mounting higher,
The angels would press on us and aspire
To drop some golden orb of perfect song
Into our deep, dear silence. Let us stay
Rather on earth, Beloved, — where the unfit
Contrarious moods of men recoil away
And isolate pure spirits, and permit
A place to stand and love in for a day,
With darkness and the death-hour rounding it.

XXIII

Is it indeed so ? If I lay here dead,
Wouldst thou miss any life in losing mine ?
And would the sun for thee more coldly shine
Because of grave-damps falling round my head ?
I marvelled, my Beloved, when I read
Thy thought so in the letter. I am thine —
But . . . *so* much to thee ? Can I pour thy wine
While my hands tremble ? Then my soul, instead
Of dreams of death, resumes life's lower range.
Then, love me, Love ! look on me — breathe on me !
As brighter ladies do not count it strange,
For love, to give up acres and degree,
I yield the grave for thy sake, and exchange
My near sweet view of heaven, for earth with thee !

XXVI

I LIV'D with visions for my company
Instead of men and women, years ago,
And found them gentle mates, nor thought to know
A sweeter music than they play'd to me.
But soon their trailing purple was not free
Of this world's dust, their lutes did silent grow,
And I myself grew faint and blind below
Their vanishing eyes. Then THOU didst come — to be,
Beloved, what they seem'd. Their shining fronts,
Their songs, their splendors, (better, yet the same,
As river-water hallow'd into fonts)
Met in thee, and from out thee overcame
My soul with satisfaction of all wants :
Because God's gift puts man's best dreams to shame.

XXXV

IF I leave all for thee, wilt thou exchange
And be all to me ? Shall I never miss
Home-talk and blessing and the common kiss
That comes to each in turn, nor count it strange,
When I look up, to drop on a new range
Of walls and floors, another home than this ?
Nay, wilt thou fill that place by me which is
Fill'd by dead eyes too tender to know change
That 's hardest ? If to conquer love, has tried,
To conquer grief, tries more, as all things prove,
For grief indeed is love and grief beside.
Alas, I have griev'd so I am hard to love.
Yet love me — wilt thou ? Open thine heart wide,
And fold within the wet wings of thy dove.

XXXVIII

FIRST time he kiss'd me, he but only kiss'd
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write ;
And ever since, it grew more clean and white,
Slow to world-greetings, quick with its "Oh, list,"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here, plainer to my sight,
Than that first kiss. The second pass'd in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half miss'd,
Half falling on the hair. O beyond meed !
That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state ; since when, indeed,
I have been proud and said, "My love, my own."

XXXIX

BECAUSE thou hast the power and own'st the grace
To look through and behind this mask of me,
(Against which, years have beat thus blanchingly
With their rains,) and behold my soul's true face,
The dim and weary witness of life's race, —
Because thou hast the faith and love to see,
Through that same soul's distracting lethargy,
The patient angel waiting for a place
In the new Heavens, — because nor sin nor woe,
Nor God's infliction, nor death's neighborhood,
Nor all which others viewing, turn to go,
Nor all which makes me tired of all, self-view'd, —
Nothing repels thee, . . . Dearest, teach me so
To pour out gratitude, as thou dost, good !

XLI

I THANK all who have lov'd me in their hearts,
With thanks and love from mine. Deep thanks to all
Who paus'd a little near the prison-wall
To hear my music in its louder parts
Ere they went onward, each one to the mart's
Or temple's occupation, beyond call.
But thou, who, in my voice's sink and fall
When the sob took it, thy divinest Art's

Own instrument didst drop down at thy foot
To hearken what I said between my tears, . . .
Instruct me how to thank thee! Oh, to shoot
My soul's full meaning into future years,
That *they* should lend it utterance, and salute
Love that endures, from Life that disappears!

XLIII

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seem'd to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river:
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flow'd the river;
And hack'd and hew'd as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notch'd the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sat by the river.

"This is the way," laugh'd the great god Pan,
(Laugh'd while he sat by the river,)
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies reviv'd, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man:
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain, —
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

FROM "CASA GUIDI WINDOWS"

JULIET OF NATIONS

I HEARD last night a little child go singing
'Neath Casa Guidi windows, by the church,
O bella libertà, O bella! — stringing
The same words still on notes he went in search
So high for, you concluded the upspringing
Of such a nimble bird to sky from perch
Must leave the whole bush in a tremble green,
And that the heart of Italy must beat,
While such a voice had leave to rise serene
'Twixt church and palace of a Florence street:
A little child, too, who not long had been
By mother's finger steadied on his feet,
And still *O bella libertà* he sang.

Then I thought, musing, of the innumerous
Sweet songs which still for Italy outrang
From older singers' lips who sang not thus
Exultingly and purely, yet, with pang
Fast sheath'd in music, touch'd the heart of us
So finely that the pity scarcely pain'd.
I thought how Filicaja led on others,
Bewailers for their Italy enchain'd,
And how they call'd her childless among mothers,
Widow of empires, ay, and scarce refrain'd
Cursing her beauty to her face, as brothers
Might a sham'd sister's, — "Had she been less fair
She were less wretched;" — how, evoking so
From congregated wrong and heap'd despair
Of men and women writhing under blow,
Harrow'd and hideous in a filthy lair,
Some personating Image wherein woe
Was wrapp'd in beauty from offending much,
They call'd it Cybele, or Niobe,
Or laid it corpse-like on a bier for such,
Where all the world might drop for Italy
Those cadenced tears which burn not where they touch, —
"Juliet of nations, canst thou die as we?
And was the violet that crown'd thy head
So over-large, though new buds made it rough,
It slipp'd down and across thine eyelids dead,
O sweet, fair Juliet?" Of such songs enough,
Too many of such complaints! behold, instead,
Void at Verona, Juliet's marble trough:
As void as that is, are all images
Men set between themselves and actual wrong,
To catch the weight of pity, meet the stress
Of conscience, — since 't is easier to gaze long
On mournful masks and sad effigies
Than on real, live, weak creatures crush'd by strong.

SURSUM CORDA

The sun strikes, through the windows, up the floor;
Stand out in it, my own young Florentine,
Not two years old, and let me see thee more!
It grows along thy amber curls, to shine
Brighter than elsewhere. Now, look straight before,
And fix thy brave blue English eyes on mine,
And from my soul, which fronts the future so,
With unabash'd and unabated gaze,
Teach me to hope for, what the angels know
When they smile clear as thou dost. Down God's ways
With just alighted feet, between the snow
And snowdrops, where a little lamb may graze,
Thou hast no fear, my lamb, about the road,
Albeit in our vain-glory we assume
That, less than we have, thou hast learnt of God.
Stand out, my blue-eyed prophet! — thou, to whom
The earliest world-day light that ever flow'd,
Through Casa Guidi windows chanced to come!
Now shake the glittering nimbus of thy hair,
And be God's witness that the elemental
New springs of life are gushing everywhere
To cleanse the water-courses, and prevent all
Concrete obstructions which infest the air!
That earth's alive, and gentle or ungentle
Motions within her, signify but growth! —
The ground swells greenest o'er the laboring moles.
Howe'er the uneasy world is vex'd and wroth,
Young children, lifted high on parent souls,
Look round them with a smile upon the mouth,
And take for music every bell that tolls;
(Who said we should be better if like these?)

But *we* sit murmuring for the future though
Posterity is smiling on our knees,
Convicting us of folly. Let us go —
We will trust God. The blank interstices
Men take for ruins, He will build into
With pillar'd marbles rare, or knit across
With generous arches, till the fane 's complete.
This world has no perdition, if some loss.

Such cheer I gather from thy smiling, Sweet!
The self-same cherub-faces which emboss
The Vail, lean inward to the Mercy-seat.

A COURT LADY

HER hair was tawny with gold, her eyes with purple were dark,
Her cheeks' pale opal burnt with a red and restless spark.

Never was lady of Milan nobler in name and in race;
Never was lady of Italy fairer to see in the face.

Never was lady on earth more true as woman and wife,
Larger in judgment and instinct, prouder in manners and life.

She stood in the early morning, and said to her maidens, "Bring
That silken robe made ready to wear at the court of the king.

"Bring me the clasps of diamond, lucid, clear of the mote,
Clasp me the large at the waist, and clasp me the small at the throat.

"Diamonds to fasten the hair, and diamonds to fasten the sleeves,
Laces to drop from their rays, like a powder of snow from the eaves."

Gorgeous she enter'd the sunlight which gather'd her up in a flame,
While, straight in her open carriage, she to the hospital came.

In she went at the door, and gazing from end to end,
"Many and low are the pallets, but each is the place of a friend."

Up she pass'd through the wards, and stood at a young man's bed:
Bloody the band on his brow, and livid the droop of his head.

"Art thou a Lombard, my brother? Happy art thou," she cried,
And smiled like Italy on him: he dream'd in her face and died.

Pale with his passing soul, she went on still to a second:
He was a grave hard man, whose years by dungeons were reckon'd.

Wounds in his body were sore, wounds in his life were sorer.
"Art thou a Romagnole?" Her eyes drove lightnings before her.

"Austrian and priest had join'd to double and tighten the cord
Able to bind thee, O strong one, — free by the stroke of a sword.

"Now be grave for the rest of us, using the life overcast
To ripen our wine of the present, (too new,) in glooms of the past."

Down she stepp'd to a pallet where lay a face like a girl's,
Young, and pathetic with dying, — a deep black hole in the curls.

"Art thou from Tuscany, brother? and seest thou, dreaming in pain,
Thy mother stand in the piazza, searching the List of the slain?"

Kind as a mother herself, she touch'd his cheeks with her hands:
"Blessed is she who has borne thee, although she should weep as she stands."

On she pass'd to a Frenchman, his arm carried off by a ball:
Kneeling, . . . "O more than my brother! how shall I thank thee for all?

"Each of the heroes around us has fought for his land and line,
But *thou* hast fought for a stranger, in hate of a wrong not thine.

"Happy are all free peoples, too strong to be dispossess'd :
But blessed are those among nations, who dare to be strong for the rest ! "

Ever she pass'd on her way, and came to a couch where pin'd
One with a face from Venetia, white with a hope out of mind.

Long she stood and gaz'd, and twice she tried at the name,
But two great crystal tears were all that falter'd and came.

Only a tear for Venice ? — she turn'd as in passion and loss,
And stoop'd to his forehead and kiss'd it, as if she were kissing the cross.

Faint with that strain of heart she mov'd on then to another,
Stern and strong in his death. "And dost thou suffer, my brother ? "

Holding his hands in hers : — "Out of the Piedmont lion
Cometh the sweetness of freedom ! sweetest to live or to die on."

Holding his cold rough hands, — "Well, oh, well have ye done
In noble, noble Piedmont, who would not be noble alone."

Back he fell while she spoke. She rose to her feet with a spring, —
"That was a Piedmontese ! and this is the Court of the King."

MOTHER AND POET

TURIN, AFTER NEWS FROM GAETA, 1861

DEAD ! One of them shot by the sea in the east,
And one of them shot in the west by the sea.
Dead ! both my boys ! When you sit at the feast
And are wanting a great song for Italy free,
Let none look at *me !*

Yet I was a poetess only last year,
And good at my art, for a woman, men said ;
But *this* woman, *this*, who is agoniz'd here,
— The east sea and west sea rhyme on in her head
For ever instead.

What art can a woman be good at ? Oh, vain !
What art *is* she good at, but hurting her breast
With the milk-teeth of babes, and a smile at the pain ?
Ah boys, how you hurt ! you were strong as you press'd,
And I proud, by that test.

What art 's for a woman ? To hold on her knees
Both darlings ; to feel all their arms round her throat,
Cling, strangle a little, to sew by degrees
And 'broider the long-clothes and neat little coat ;
To dream and to doat.

To teach them . . . It stings there ! *I* made them indeed
Speak plain the word *country*. *I* taught them, no doubt,
That a country 's a thing men should die for at need.
I prated of liberty, rights, and about
The tyrant cast out.

And when their eyes flash'd . . . O my beautiful eyes ! . . .
I exulted ; nay, let them go forth at the wheels
Of the guns, and denied not. But then the surprise
When one sits quite alone ! Then one weeps, then one kneels !
God, how the house feels !

At first, happy news came, in gay letters moil'd
With my kisses, — of camp-life and glory, and how
They both lov'd me ; and, soon coming home to be spoil'd,
In return would fan off every fly from my brow
With their green laurel-bough.

Then was triumph at Turin: "Ancona was free!"
And someone came out of the cheers in the street,
With a face pale as stone, to say something to me.
My Guido was dead! I fell down at his feet,
While they cheer'd in the street.

I bore it; friends sooth'd me; my grief look'd sublime
As the ransom of Italy. One boy remain'd
To be leant on and walk'd with, recalling the time
When the first grew immortal, while both of us strain'd
To the height he had gain'd.

And letters still came, shorter, sadder, more strong,
Writ now but in one hand, "I was not to faint, —
One lov'd me for two — would be with me ere long:
And *Viva l' Italia!* — *he* died for, our saint,
Who forbids our complaint."

My Nanni would add, "he was safe, and aware
Of a presence that turn'd off the balls, — was impress'd
It was Guido himself, who knew what I could bear,
And how 't was impossible, quite dispossess'd,
To live on for the rest."

On which, without pause, up the telegraph-line,
Swept smoothly the next news from Gaeta: — *Shot.*
Tell his mother. Ah, ah, "his," "their" mother, — not "mine,"
No voice says "*My* mother" again to me. What!
You think Guido forgot?

Are souls straight so happy that, dizzy with Heaven,
They drop earth's affections, conceive not of woe?
I think not. Themselves were too lately forgiven
Through THAT Love and Sorrow which reconcil'd so
The Above and Below.

O Christ of the five wounds, who look'dst through the dark
To the face of Thy mother! consider, I pray,
How we common mothers stand desolate, mark,
Whose sons, not being Christs, die with eyes turn'd away,
And no last word to say!

Both boys dead? but that 's out of nature. We all
Have been patriots, yet each house must always keep one.
'T were imbecile, hewing out roads to a wall;
And, when Italy 's made, for what end is it done
If we have not a son?

Ah, ah, ah! when Gaeta 's taken, what then?
When the fair wicked queen sits no more at her sport
Of the fire-balls of death crashing souls out of men?
When the guns of Cavalli with final retort
Have cut the game short?

When Venice and Rome keep their new jubilee,
When your flag takes all heaven for its white, green, and red,
When *you* have your country from mountain to sea,
When King Victor has Italy's crown on his head,
(And *I* have my Dead) —

What then? Do not mock me. Ah, ring your bells low,
And burn your lights faintly! *My* country is *there*,
Above the star prick'd by the last peak of snow:
My Italy 's THERE, with my brave civic Pair,
To disfranchise despair!

Forgive me. Some women bear children in strength,
And bite back the cry of their pain in self-scorn;
But the birth-pangs of nations will wring us at length
Into wail such as this — and we sit on forlorn
When the man-child is born.

Dead! One of them shot by the sea in the east,
And one of them shot in the west by the sea,
Both! both my boys! If in keeping the feast
You want a great song for your Italy free,
Let none look at *me*.

[This was Laura Savio, of Turin, a poet and patriot, whose sons were killed at Ancona and Gaeta.]

FROM "AURORA LEIGH"

MOTHERLESS

I WRITE. My mother was a Florentine,
Whose rare blue eyes were shut from seeing me
When scarcely I was four years old; my life,
A poor spark snatch'd up from a failing lamp
Which went out therefore. She was weak and frail;
She could not bear the joy of giving life —
The mother's rapture slew her. If her kiss
Had left a longer weight upon my lips,
It might have steadied the uneasy breath,
And reconcil'd and fraterniz'd my soul
With the new order. As it was, indeed,
I felt a mother-want about the world,
And still went seeking, like a bleating lamb
Left out at night, in shutting up the fold, —
As restless as a nest-deserted bird
Grown chill through something being away, though what
It knows not. I, Aurora Leigh, was born
To make my father sadder, and myself
Not overjoyous, truly. Women know
The way to rear up children (to be just,)
They know a simple, merry, tender knack
Of tying sashes, fitting baby-shoes,
And stringing pretty words that make no sense,
And kissing full sense into empty words;
Which things are corals to cut life upon,
Although such trifles: children learn by such,
Love's holy earnest in a pretty play,
And get not over-early solemniz'd, —
But seeing, as in a rose-bush, Love 's Divine,
Which burns and hurts not, — not a single bloom, —
Become aware and unafraid of Love.
Such good do mothers. Fathers love as well
— Mine did, I know, — but still with heavier brains,
And wills more consciously responsible,
And not as wisely, since less foolishly;
So mothers have God's license to be miss'd.

BOOKS

Or else I sat on in my chamber green,
And liv'd my life, and thought my thoughts, and pray'd
My prayers without the vicar; read my books,
Without considering whether they were fit
To do me good. Mark, there. We get no good
By being ungenerous, even to a book,
And calculating profits . . . so much help
By so much reading. It is rather when
We gloriously forget ourselves, and plunge
Soul-forward, headlong, into a book's profound,
Impassion'd for its beauty and salt of truth —
'T is then we get the right good from a book.

THE POETS

I had found the secret of a garret-room
Pil'd high with cases in my father's name;
Pil'd high, pack'd large, — where, creeping in and out
Among the giant fossils of my past,
Like some small nimble mouse between the ribs
Of a mastodon, I nibbled here and there
At this or that box, pulling through the gap,
In heats of terror, haste, victorious joy,
The first book first. And how I felt it beat
Under my pillow, in the morning's dark,
An hour before the sun would let me read!
My books!

At last, because the time was ripe,
I chanced upon the poets.
As the earth
Plunges in fury, when the internal fires
Have reach'd and prick'd her heart, and, throwing flat
The marts and temples, the triumphal gates
And towers of observation, clears herself
To elemental freedom — thus, my soul,
At poetry's divine first finger touch,
Let go conventions and sprang up surpris'd,
Convicted of the great eternities
Before two worlds.
What 's this, Aurora Leigh,
You write so of the poets, and not laugh?
Those virtuous liars, dreamers after dark,
Exaggerators of the sun and moon,
And soothsayers in a tea-cup?
I write so
Of the only truth-tellers, now left to God, —
The only speakers of essential truth,
Oppos'd to relative, comparative,
And temporal truths; the only holders by
His sun-skirts, through conventional gray glooms;
The only teachers who instruct mankind,
From just a shadow on a charnel wall,
To find man's veritable stature out,
Erect, sublime, — the measure of a man,
And that 's the measure of an angel, says
The apostle.

THE FERMENT OF NEW WINE

And so, like most young poets, in a flush
Of individual life, I pour'd myself
Along the veins of others, and achiev'd
Mere lifeless imitations of live verse,
And made the living answer for the dead,
Profaning nature. "Touch not, do not taste,
Nor handle," — we're too legal, who write young:
We beat the phorminx till we hurt our thumbs,
As if still ignorant of counterpoint;
We call the Muse . . . "O Muse, benignant Muse!" —
As if we had seen her purple-braided head
With the eyes in it start between the boughs
As often as a stag's. What make-believe,
With so much earnest! what effete results,
From virile efforts! what cold wire-drawn odes,
From such white heats! bucolics, where the cows
Would scare the writer if they splash'd the mud
In lashing off the flies, — didactics, driven
Against the heels of what the master said;
And counterfeiting epics, shrill with trumps
A babe might blow between two straining cheeks
Of bubbled rose, to make his mother laugh;
And elegiac griefs, and songs of love,
Like cast-off nosegays pick'd up on the road,
The worse for being warm: all these things, writ
On happy mornings, with a morning heart,
That leaps for love, is active for resolve,
Weak for art only. Oft, the ancient forms
Will thrill, indeed, in carrying the young blood.
The wine-skins, now and then, a little warp'd,
Will crack even, as the new wine gurgles in.
Spare the old bottles! — spill not the new wine.

By Keats's soul, the man who never stepp'd
In gradual progress like another man,
But, turning grandly on his central self,
Enspher'd himself in twenty perfect years
And died, not young, — (the life of a long life,
Distill'd to a mere drop, falling like a tear
Upon the world's cold cheek to make it burn
For ever;) by that strong excepted soul,
I count it strange, and hard to understand,
That nearly all young poets should write old;
That Pope was sexagenarian at sixteen,
And beardless Byron academical,
And so with others. It may be, perhaps,
Such have not settled long and deep enough
In trance, to attain to clairvoyance, — and still
The memory mixes with the vision, spoils,
And works it turbid.
Or perhaps, again
In order to discover the Muse-Sphinx,
The melancholy desert must sweep round,
Behind you, as before. —
For me, I wrote
False poems, like the rest, and thought them true,

Because myself was true in writing them.
I, peradventure, have writ true ones since
With less complacence.

ENGLAND

Whoever lives true life, will love true love.
I learn'd to love that England. Very oft,
Before the day was born, or otherwise
Through secret windings of the afternoons,
I threw my hunters off and plunged myself
Among the deep hills, as a hunted stag
Will take the waters, shivering with the fear
And passion of the course. And when, at last
Escap'd, — so many a green slope built on slope
Betwixt me and the enemy's house behind,
I dar'd to rest, or wander, — like a rest
Made sweeter for the step upon the grass, —
And view the ground's most gentle dimplement,
(As if God's finger touch'd but did not press
In making England !) such an up and down
Of verdure, — nothing too much up or down,
A ripple of land ; such little hills, the sky
Can stoop to tenderly and the wheatfields climb ;
Such nooks of valleys, lin'd with orchises,
Fed full of noises by invisible streams ;
And open pastures, where you scarcely tell
White daisies from white dew, — at intervals
The mythic oaks and elm-trees standing out
Self-pois'd upon their prodigy of shade, —
I thought my father's land was worthy too
Of being my Shakespeare's. . . .
. . . Breaking into voluble ecstacy,
I flatter'd all the beauteous country round,
As poets use . . . the skies, the clouds, the fields,
The happy violets hiding from the roads
The primroses run down to, carrying gold, —
The tangled hedgerows, where the cows push out
Impatient horns and tolerant churning mouths
'Twixt dripping ash-boughs, — hedgerows all alive
With birds and gnats and large white butterflies
Which look as if the May-flower had sought life
And palpitated forth upon the wind,—
Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,
Farms, granges, doubled up among the hills,
And cattle grazing in the water'd vales,
And cottage-chimneys smoking from the woods,
And cottage-gardens smelling everywhere,
Confus'd with smell of orchards. "See," I said,
"And see ! is God not with us on the earth ?
And shall we put Him down by aught we do ?
Who says there 's nothing for the poor and vile
Save poverty and wickedness ? behold ! "
And ankle-deep in English grass I leap'd,
And clapp'd my hands, and call'd all very fair.

"BY SOLITARY FIRES"

O my God, my God,
O supreme Artist, who as sole return
For all the cosmic wonder of Thy work,
Demandest of us just a word . . . a name,
"My Father ! " — thou hast knowledge, only thou,
How dreary 't is for women to sit still
On winter nights by solitary fires,
And hear the nations praising them far off,
Too far ! ay, praising our quick sense of love,
Our very heart of passionate womanhood,
Which could not beat so in the verse without
Being present also in the unkiss'd lips,
And eyes undried because there 's none to ask
The reason they grew moist.
To sit alone,
And think, for comfort, how, that very night,
Affianced lovers, leaning face to face
With sweet half-listenings for each other's breath,
Are reading haply from some page of ours,
To pause with a thrill, as if their cheeks had touch'd,
When such a stanza, level to their mood,
Seems floating their own thoughts out — "So I feel
For thee," — "And I, for thee : this poet knows
What everlasting love is ! " — how, that night

A father issuing from the misty roads
Upon the luminous round of lamp and hearth
And happy children, having caught up first
The youngest there until it shrunk and shriek'd
To feel the cold chin prick its dimple through
With winter from the hills, may throw i' the lap
Of the eldest (who has learn'd to drop her lids
To hide some sweetness newer than last year's)
Our book and cry, . . . "Ah you, you care for rhymes ;
So here be rhymes to pore on under trees,
When April comes to let you ! I 've been told
They are not idle as so many are,
But set hearts beating pure as well as fast :
It 's yours, the book ; I 'll write your name in it, —
That so you may not lose, however lost
In poet's lore and charming reverie,
The thought of how your father thought of *you*
In riding from the town."
To have our books
Apprais'd by love, associated with love,
While *we* sit loveless ! is it hard, you think ?
At least 't is mournful. Fame, indeed, 't was said,
Means simply love. It was a man said that.
And then there 's love and love : the love of all
(To risk, in turn, a woman's paradox,)
Is but a small thing to the love of one.
You bid a hungry child be satisfied
With a heritage of many corn-fields : nay,
He says he 's hungry, — he would rather have
That little barley-cake you keep from him
While reckoning up his harvests. So with us.

ROMNEY AND AURORA

But oh, the night ! oh, bitter-sweet ! oh, sweet !
O dark, O moon and stars, O ecstasy
Of darkness ! O great mystery of love, —
In which absorb'd, loss, anguish, treason's self
Enlarges rapture, — as a pebble dropp'd
In some full wine-cup, over-brims the wine !
While we two sate together, lean'd that night
So close, my very garments crept and thrill'd
With strange electric life ; and both my cheeks
Grew red, then pale, with touches from my hair
In which his breath was ; while the golden moon
Was hung before our faces as the badge
Of some sublime inherited despair,
Since ever to be seen by only one, —
A voice said, low and rapid as a sigh,
Yet breaking, I felt conscious, from a smile, —
"Thank God, who made me blind, to make me see !
Shine on, Aurora, dearest light of souls,
Which rul'st for evermore both day and night !
I am happy."
I flung closer to his breast,
As sword that, after battle, flings to sheathe ;
And, in that hurtle of united souls,
The mystic motions, which in common moods
Are shut beyond our sense, broke in on us,
And, as we sate, we felt the old earth spin,
And all the starry turbulence of worlds
Swing round us in their audient circles, till
If that same golden moon were overhead
Or if beneath our feet, we did not know.

THE SLEEP

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward into souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is
For gift or grace surpassing this —
"He giveth His beloved, sleep" ?

What would we give to our beloved ?
The hero's heart to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tun'd harp to sweep,
The patriot's voice to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown to light the brows ? —
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

What do we give to our beloved ?
A little faith all undisproved,

A little dust to overweep,
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake :
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

"Sleep soft, beloved !" we sometimes say
Who have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber when
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

O earth, so full of dreary noises !
O men, with wailing in your voices !
O delved gold, the wailers heap !
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall !
God strikes a silence through you all,
And giveth His beloved, sleep.

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap :
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
He giveth His beloved, sleep.

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man
Confirm'd in such a rest to keep ;
But angels say, and through the word
I think their happy smile is *heard* —
"He giveth His beloved, sleep."

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on His love repose
Who giveth His beloved, sleep.

And friends, dear friends, when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let One, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall !
He giveth His beloved, sleep."

Alfred Domett

A GLEE FOR WINTER

Hence, rude Winter ! crabbed old fellow,
Never merry, never mellow !
Well-a-day ! in rain and snow
What will keep one's heart aglow ?
Groups of kinsmen, old and young,
Oldest they old friends among ;
Groups of friends, so old and true
That they seem our kinsmen too ;
These all merry all together
Charm away chill Winter weather.

What will kill this dull old fellow ?
Ale that 's bright, and wine that 's mellow !
Dear old songs for ever new ;
Some true love, and laughter too ;
Pleasant wit, and harmless fun,
And a dance when day is done.
Music, friends so true and tried,
Whisper'd love by warm fireside,
Mirth at all times all together,
Make sweet May of Winter weather.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN

(old style : 1837)

It was the calm and silent night !
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was Queen of land and sea.
No sound was heard of clashing wars ;
Peace brooded o'er the hush'd domain ;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars,
Held undisturb'd their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

'T was in the calm and silent night !
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home.
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway ;
What reck'd the Roman what befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago !

Within that province far away
  Went plodding home a weary boor :
A streak of light before him lay,
  Fall'n through a half-shut stable door
Across his path. He pass'd — for nought
  Told what was going on within ;
How keen the stars ! his only thought ;
  The air how calm and cold and thin,
    In the solemn midnight
      Centuries ago !

O strange indifference ! — low and high
  Drows'd over common joys and cares :
The earth was still — but knew not why ;
  The world was listening — unawares.
How calm a moment may precede
  One that shall thrill the world for ever !
To that still moment none would heed,
  Man's doom was link'd, no more to sever,
    In the solemn midnight
      Centuries ago.

It *is* the calm and solemn night !
  A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
  The darkness, charm'd and holy now.
The night that erst no name had worn,
  To it a happy name is given ;
For in that stable lay new-born
  The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,
    In the solemn midnight
      Centuries ago.

FROM "A CHRISTMAS HYMN"

(NEW STYLE : 1875)

  To murder one so young !
  To still that wonder-teeming tongue
Ere half the fulness of its mellow'd glory
  Had flash'd in mild sheet-lightnings forth!
Who knows, had that majestic Life grown hoary,
  Long vers'd in all man's weakness, woes and worth,
What beams had pierced the clouds that veil this voyage of care !
  Not Zeus, nor Baal's throne,
  Nor Osiris alone,
  But Doubt, or worse assurance of Despair,
Or Superstition's brood that blends the tiger with the hare.

  Who knows but we had caught
  Some hint from pure impassion'd Thought,
How Matter's links and Spirit's, that still fly us,
  Can break and still leave Spirit free ;
How Will can act o'ermaster'd by no bias ;
  Why Good omnipotent lets Evil be ;
What balm heals beauteous Nature's universal flaw ;
  And how, below, above,
  It is Love, and only Love
  Bids keen Sensation glut Destruction's maw —
Love rolls this groaning Sea of Life on pitiless rocks of Law !

William Bell Scott

GLENKINDIE

ABOUT Glenkindie and his man
A false ballant hath long been writ ;
Some bootless loon had written it,
  Upon a bootless plan :
But I have found the true at last,
And here it is, — so hold it fast !
'T was made by a kind damosel
Who lov'd him and his man right well.

Glenkindie, best of harpers, came
  Unbidden to our town ;
And he was sad, and sad to see,
  For love had worn him down.

It was love, as all men know,
  The love that brought him down,
The hopeless love for the King's daughter,
  The dove that heir'd a crown.

Now he wore not that collar of gold,
  His dress was forest green ;
His wondrous fair and rich mantel
  Had lost its silvery sheen.

But still by his side walk'd Rafe, his boy,
  In goodly cramoisie :
Of all the boys that ever I saw
  The goodliest boy was he.

O Rafe the page ! O Rafe the page !
  Ye stole the heart frae me :
O Rafe the page ! O Rafe the page !
  I wonder where ye be :
We ne'er may see Glenkindie more,
  But may we never see thee ?

Glenkindie came within the hall ;
  We set him on the dais,
And gave him bread, and gave him wine,
  The best in all the place.

We set for him the guests' high chair,
  And spread the naperie :
Our Dame herself would serve for him,
  And I for Rafe, perdie !

But down he sat on a low low stool,
  And thrust his long legs out,
And lean'd his back to the high chair,
  And turn'd his harp about.

He turn'd it round, he strok'd the strings,
  He touch'd each tirling-pin,
He put his mouth to the sounding-board
  And breath'd his breath therein.

And Rafe sat over against his face,
  And look'd at him wistfullie :
I almost grat ere he began,
  They were so sad to see.

The very first stroke he strack that day,
  We all came crowding near ;
And the second stroke he strack that day,
  We all were smit with fear.

The third stroke that he strack that day,
  Full fain we were to cry ;
The fourth stroke that he strack that day,
  We thought that we would die.

No tongue can tell how sweet it was,
  How far, and yet how near :
We saw the saints in Paradise,
  And bairnies on their bier.

And our sweet Dame saw her good lord —
  She told me privilie :
She saw him as she saw him last,
  On his ship upon the sea.

Anon he laid his little harp by,
  He shut his wondrous eyes ;
We stood a long time like dumb things,
  Stood in a dumb surprise.

Then all at once we left that trance,
  And shouted where we stood ;
We clasp'd each other's hands and vow'd
  We would be wise and good.

Soon he rose up and Rafe rose too,
  He drank wine and broke bread ;
He clasp'd hands with our trembling Dame,
  But never a word he said ;
They went, — Alack and lack-a-day !
  They went the way they came.

I follow'd them all down the floor,
  And O but I had drouth
To touch his cheek, to touch his hand,
  To kiss Rafe's velvet mouth !

But I knew such was not for me.
  They went straight from the door ;
We saw them fade within the mist,
  And never saw them more.

YOUTH AND AGE

Our night repast was ended : quietness
Return'd again : the boys were in their books ;
The old man slept, and by him slept his dog :
My thoughts were in the dream-land of to-morrow :
A knock is heard ; anon the maid brings in
A black-seal'd letter that some over-work'd
Late messenger leaves. Each one looks round and scans,
But lifts it not, and I at last am told
To read it. "Died here at his house this day" —
Some well-known name not needful here to print,
Follows at length. Soon all return again
To their first stillness, but the old man coughs,
And cries, "Ah, he was always like the grave,
And still he was but young !" while those who stand
On life's green threshold smile within themselves,
Thinking how very old he was to them,
And what long years, what memorable deeds,

Are theirs in prospect! Little care have they
What old man dies, what child is born, indeed;
Their day is coming, and their sun shall shine!

PYGMALION

"MISTRESS of gods and men! I have been thine
From boy to man, and many a myrtle rod
Have I made grow upon thy sacred sod,
Nor ever have I pass'd thy white shafts nine
Without some votive offering for the shrine,
Carv'd beryl or chas'd bloodstone; — aid me now,
And I will live to fashion for thy brow
Heart-breaking priceless things: oh, make her mine."

Venus inclin'd her ear, and through the Stone
Forthwith slid warmth like spring through sapling-stems,
And lo, the eyelid stirr'd, beneath had grown
The tremulous light of life, and all the hems
Of her zon'd peplos shook. Upon his breast
She sank, by two dread gifts at once oppress'd.

MY MOTHER

THERE was a gather'd stillness in the room:
Only the breathing of the great sea rose
From far off, aiding that profound repose,
With regular pulse and pause within the gloom
Of twilight, as if some impending doom
Was now approaching; — I sat moveless there,
Watching with tears and thoughts that were like prayer,
Till the hour struck, — the thread dropp'd from the loom;
And the Bark pass'd in which freed souls are borne.
The dear still'd face lay there; that sound forlorn
Continued; I rose not, but long sat by:
And now my heart oft hears that sad sea-shore,
When she is in the far-off land, and I
Wait the dark sail returning yet once more.

THE NORNS WATERING YGGDRASILL

(FOR A PICTURE)

WITHIN the unchanging twilight
Of the high land of the gods,
Between the murmuring fountain
And the Ash-tree, tree of trees,
The Norns, the terrible maidens,
For evermore come and go.

Yggdrasill the populous Ash-tree,
Whose leaves embroider heaven,
Fills all the gray air with music —
To Gods and to men sweet sounds,
But speech to the fine-ear'd maidens
Who evermore come and go.

That way to their doomstead thrones
The Aesir ride each day,
And every one bends to the saddle
As they pass beneath the shade;
Even Odin, the strong All-father,
Bends to the beautiful maidens
Who cease not to come and go.

The tempest crosses the high boughs,
The great snakes heave below,
The wolf, the boar, and antler'd harts
Delve at the life-giving roots,
But all of them fear the wise maidens,
The wise-hearted water-bearers
Who evermore come and go.

And men far away, in the night-hours
To the north-wind listening, hear;
They hear the howl of the were-wolf,
And know he hath felt the sting
Of the eyes of the potent maidens
Who sleeplessly come and go.

They hear on the wings of the north-wind
A sound as of three that sing;
And the skald, in the blae mist wandering
High on the midland fell,
Heard the very words of the o'ersong
Of the Norns who come and go.

But alas for the ears of mortals
Chance-hearing that fate-laden song!
The bones of the skald lie there still:
For the speech of the leaves of the Tree
Is the song of the three Queen-maidens
Who evermore come and go.

TO THE DEAD

(A PARAPHRASE)

GONE art thou? gone, and is the light of day
Still shining, is my hair not touch'd with gray?
But evening draweth nigh, I pass the door,
And see thee walking on the dim-lit shore.

Gone, art thou? gone, and weary on the brink
Of Lethe waiting there. O do not drink,
Drink not, forget not, wait a little while,
I shall be with thee; we again may smile.

HERO-WORSHIP

How would the centuries long asunder
Look on their sires with angry wonder,
Could some strong necromantic power
Revive them for one spectral hour!
Bondsmen of the past are we, —
Predestin'd bondsmen: could we see
The dead now deified, again
Peering among environing men,
We might be free.

William James Linton

EVICTION[1]

LONG years their cabin stood
Out on the moor;
More than one sorrow-brood
Pass'd through their door;
Ruin them over-cast,
Worse than one wintry blast;
Famine's plague follow'd fast:
God help the poor!

There on that heap of fern,
Gasping for breath,
Lieth the wretched kérn,
Waiting for death:
Famine had brought him low;
Fever had caught him so, —
O thou sharp-grinding woe,
Outwear thy sheath!

Dying, or living here —
Which is the worse?
Misery's heavy tear,
Back to thy source!
Who dares to lift her head
Up from the scarcely dead?
Who pulls the crazy shed
Down on the corse?

What though some rent was due,
Hast thou no grace?
So may God pardon you,
Shame of your race!
What though that home may be
Wretched and foul to see,
What if God harry thee
Forth from His face?

Widow'd and orphan'd ones,
Flung from your rest!
Where will you lay your bones?
Bad was your best.
Out on the dreary road,
Where shall be their abode?
One of them sleeps with God:
Where are the rest?

PATIENCE[1]

BE patient, O be patient! Put your ear against the earth;
Listen there how noiselessly the germ o' the seed has birth;
How noiselessly and gently it upheaves its little way
Till it parts the scarcely-broken ground, and the blade stands up in the day.

Be patient, O be patient! the germs of mighty thought
Must have their silent undergrowth, must underground be wrought;
But, as sure as ever there 's a Power that makes the grass appear,
Our land shall be green with Liberty, the blade-time shall be here.

[1] From his early Poems of Freedom.

Be patient, O be patient! go and watch the wheat-ears grow,
So imperceptibly that ye can mark nor change nor throe:
Day after day, day after day till the ear is fully grown;
And then again day after day, till the ripen'd field is brown.

Be patient, O be patient! though yet our hopes are green,
The harvest-field of Freedom shall be crown'd with the sunny sheen.
Be ripening, be ripening! mature your silent way
Till the whole broad land is tongued with fire on Freedom's harvest day.

OUR CAUSE[1]

So, Freedom, thy great quarrel may we serve,
With truest zeal that, sensitive of blame,
Ever thy holy banner would preserve
As pure as woman's love or knightly fame.

And though detraction's flood we proudly breast,
Or, weakening, sink in that unfathom'd sea,
Ever we 'll keep aloft our banner, lest
Even the black spray soil its purity.

My life be branded and my name be flung
To infamy; — beloved, I will wear
Thy beauty on my shield, till even the tongue
Of falsehood echo truth, and own thee fair.

HEART AND WILL[1]

Our England's heart is sound as oak;
Our English will is firm;
And through our actions Freedom spoke
In history's proudest term:
When Blake was lord from shore to shore,
And Cromwell rul'd the land,
And Milton's words were shields of power
To stay the oppressor's hand.

Our England's heart is yet as sound,
As firm our English will;
And tyrants, be they cowl'd or crown'd,
Shall find us fearless still.
And though our Vane be in his tomb,
Though Hampden's blood is cold,
Their spirits live to lead our doom
As in the days of old.

Our England's heart is stout as oak;
Our English will as brave
As when indignant Freedom spoke
From Eliot's prison grave.
And closing yet again with Wrong,
A world in arms shall see
Our England foremost of the strong
And first among the free.

FROM "A THRENODY: IN MEMORY OF ALBERT DARASZ"

O blessed Dead! beyond all earthly pains:
Beyond the calculation of low needs;
Thy growth no longer chok'd by earthly weeds;
Thy spirit clear'd from care's corrosive chains.
O blessed Dead! O blessed Life-in-death,
Transcending all life's poor decease of breath!

Thou walkest not upon some desolate moor
In the storm-wildering midnight, when thine own,
Thy trusted friend, hath lagg'd and left thee lone.
He knows not poverty who, being poor,
Hath still one friend. But he who fain had kept
The comrade whom his zeal hath overstept.

Thou sufferest not the friendly cavilling
Impugning motive; nor that worse than spear
Of foeman, — biting doubt of one most dear
Laid in thy deepest heart, a barbed sting
Never to be withdrawn. For we were friends:
Alas! and neither to the other bends.

Thou hast escap'd continual falling off
Of old companions; and that aching void
Of the proud heart which has been overbuoy'd
With friendship's idle breath; and now the scoff
Of failure even as idly passeth by
Thy poor remains: — *Thou* soaring through the sky.

[1] From his early Poems of Freedom.

Knowing no more that malady of hope —
The sickness of deferral, thou canst look
Thorough the heavens and, healthily patient, brook
Delay, — defeat. For in thy vision's scope
Most distant cometh. We might see it too,
But dizzying faintness overveils our view.

And when disaster flings us in the dust,
Or when we wearily drop on the highway-side,
Or when in prison'd, exil'd depths the pride
Of suffering bows its head, as oft it must,
We cannot, looking on thy wasted corse,
Perceive the future. Lend us of thy force!

LOVE AND YOUTH

Two winged genii in the air
I greeted as they pass'd me by:
The one a bow and quiver bare,
The other shouted joyously.
Both I besought to stay their speed,
But never Love nor Youth had heed
Of my wild cry.

As swift and careless as the wind,
Youth fled, nor ever once look'd back;
A moment Love was left behind,
But follow'd soon his fellow's track.
Yet loitering at my heart he bent
His bow, then smil'd with changed intent:
The string was slack.

TOO LATE

Yes! thou art fair, and I had lov'd
If we in earlier hours had met;
But ere tow'rd me thy beauty mov'd
The sun of Love's brief day had set.

Though I may watch thy opening bloom,
And its rich promise gladly see,
'T will not procrastinate my doom:
The ripen'd fruit is not for me.

Yet, had I shar'd thy course of years,
And young as Hope beheld thy charms,
The love that only now endears
Perchance had given thee to my arms.

Vain, vain regret! Another day
Will kiss the buds of younger flowers,
But ne'er will evening turn away
From love untimelier than ours.

WEEP NOT! SIGH NOT!

Weep not! tears must vainly fall,
Though they fall like rain:
Sorrow's flood shall not recall
Love 's dear life again.
Vain thy tears,
Vain thy sobs;
As vain heart-throbs
Of lonely years
Since thou Love hast slain.

Sigh not! As a passed wind
Is but sought in vain,
Sighs nor groans may not unbind
Death's unbroken chain.
Sighs and tears
Nought avail,
Nor cheeks grown pale
In lonely years.
Love comes not again.

SPRING AND AUTUMN

"Thou wilt forget me." "Love has no such word."
The soft Spring wind is whispering to the trees.
Among lime-blossoms have the hovering bees
Those whispers heard?

"Or thou wilt change." "Love changeth not," he said.
The purple heather cloys the air with scent
Of honey. O'er the moors her lover went,
Nor turn'd his head.

LOVE'S BLINDNESS

They call her fair. I do not know:
I never thought to look.
Who heeds the binder's costliest show
When he may read the book?

What need a list of parts to me
When I possess the whole?
Who only watch her eyes to see
The color of her soul.

I may not praise her mouth, her chin,
Her feet, her hands, her arms :
My love lacks leisure to begin
The schedule of her charms.

To praise is only to compare :
And therefore Love is blind.
I lov'd before I was aware
Her beauty was of kind.

THE SILENCED SINGER

The nest is built, the song hath ceas'd :
The minstrel joineth in the feast,
So singeth not. The poet's verse,
Crippled by Hymen's household curse,
Follows no more its hungry quest.
Well if Love's feathers line the nest.

Yet blame not that beside the fire
Love hangeth up his unstrung lyre !
How sing of hope when Hope hath fled,
Joy whispering lip to lip instead ?
Or how repeat the tuneful moan
When the Obdùrate 's all my own ?

Love, like the lark, while soaring sings :
Wouldst have him spread again his wings ?
What careth he for higher skies
Who on the heart of harvest lies,
And finds both sun and firmament
Clos'd in the round of his content ?

EPICUREAN

In Childhood's unsuspicious hours
The fairies crown'd my head with flowers.

Youth came : I lay at Beauty's feet ;
She smil'd and said my song was sweet.

Then Age, and, Love no longer mine,
My brows I shaded with the vine.

With flowers and love and wine and song,
O Death ! life hath not been too long.

Robert Nicoll

WE'LL A' GO PU' THE HEATHER

We 'll a' go pu the heather,
Our byres are a' to theek :
Unless the peat-stack get a hap,
We 'll a' be smoor'd wi' reek.
Wi' rantin' sang awa' we 'll gang,
While summer skies are blue,
To fend against the winter cauld
The heather we will pu'.

I like to pu' the heather,
We 're aye sae mirthfu' where
The sunshine creeps atour the crags,
Like ravell'd golden hair.
Where on the hill-tap we can stand
Wi' joyfu' heart I trow,
And mark ilk grassy bank and holm,
As we the heather pu'.

I like to pu' the heather,
Where harmless lambkins run,
Or lay them down beside the burn
Like gowans in the sun ;
Where ilka foot can tread upon
The heath-flower wet wi' dew,
When comes the starnie ower the hill,
While we the heather pu'.

I like to pu' the heather,
For ane can gang awa',
But no before a glint o' love
On some ane's e'e doth fa'.
Sweet words we dare to whisper there,
"My hinny and my doo,"
Till maistly we wi' joy could greet
As we the heather pu'.

We 'll a' go pu' the heather,
For at yon mountain fit
There stands a broom bush by a burn,
Where twa young folk can sit :
He meets me there at morning's rise,
My beautiful and true.
My father said the word — the morn
The heather we will pu'.

BONNIE BESSIE LEE

Bonnie Bessie Lee had a face fu' o' smiles,
And mirth round her ripe lip was aye dancing slee ;
And light was the footfa', and winsome the wiles,
O' the flower o' the parochin — our ain Bessie Lee.

Wi' the bairns she would rin, and the school laddies paik,
And o'er the broomy braes like a fairy would flee,
Till auld hearts grew young again wi' love for her sake :
There was life in the blithe blink o' Bonnie Bessie Lee.

She grat wi' the waefu', and laugh'd wi' the glad,
And light as the wind 'mang the dancers was she ;
And a tongue that could jeer, too, the little limmer had,
Whilk keepit aye her ain side for Bonnie Bessie Lee.

And she whiles had a sweetheart, and sometimes had twa —
A limmer o' a lassie ! — but, atween you and me,
Her warm wee bit heartie she ne'er threw awa',
Though mony a ane had sought it frae Bonnie Bessie Lee.

But ten years had gane since I gaz'd on her last,
For ten years had parted my auld hame and me ;
And I said to mysel', as her mither's door I past,
" Will I ever get anither kiss frae Bonnie Bessie Lee ? "

But Time changes a' thing — the ill-natur'd loon !
Were it ever sae rightly he 'll no let it be ;
But I rubbit at my een, and I thought I would swoon,
How the carle had come roun' about our ain Bessie Lee !

The wee laughing lassie was a gudewife grown auld,
Twa weans at her apron and ane on her knee ;
She was douce, too, and wiselike — and wisdom 's sae cauld :
I would rather ha'e the ither ane than this Bessie Lee !

THE HERO

My hero is na deck'd wi' gowd,
He has nae glittering state ;
Renown upon a field o' blood
In war he hasna met.
He has nae siller in his pouch,
Nae menials at his ca' ;
The proud o' earth frae him would turn,
And bid him stand awa'.

His coat is hame-spun hodden-gray,
His shoon are clouted sair,
His garments, maist unhero-like,
Are a' the waur o' wear :
His limbs are strong — his shoulders broad,
His hands were made to plough ;
He 's rough without, but sound within ;
His heart is bauldly true.

He toils at e'en, he toils at morn,
His wark is never through ;
A coming life o' weary toil
Is ever in his view.
But on he trudges, keeping aye
A stout heart to the brae,
And proud to be an honest man
Until his dying day.

His hame a hame o' happiness
And kindly love may be ;
And monie a nameless dwelling-place
Like his we still may see.
His happy altar-hearth so bright
Is ever bleezing there ;
And cheerfu' faces round it set
Are an unending prayer.

The poor man in his humble hame,
Like God, who dwells aboon,
Makes happy hearts around him there,
Sae joyfu' late and soon.
His toil is sair, his toil is lang ;
But weary nights and days,
Hame — happiness akin to his —
A hunder-fauld repays.

Go, mock at conquerors and kings !
What happiness give they ?
Go, tell the painted butterflies
To kneel them down and pray !
Go, stand erect in manhood's pride,
Be what a man should be,
Then come, and to my hero bend
Upon the grass your knee !

Wathen Marks Wilks Call

THE PEOPLE'S PETITION

O LORDS ! O rulers of the nation !
O softly cloth'd ! O richly fed !
O men of wealth and noble station !
Give us our daily bread.

For you we are content to toil,
For you our blood like rain is shed ;
Then, lords and rulers of the soil,
Give us our daily bread.

Your silken robes, with endless care,
Still weave we ; still uncloth'd, unfed,
We make the raiment that ye wear :
Give us our daily bread.

In the red forge-light do we stand,
We early leave — late seek our bed,
Tempering the steel for your right hand :
Give us our daily bread.

We sow your fields, ye reap the fruit ;
We live in misery and in dread ;
Hear but our prayer, and we are mute :
Give us our daily bread.

Throughout old England's pleasant fields
There is no spot where we may tread,
No house to us sweet shelter yields :
Give us our daily bread.

Fathers are we ; we see our sons,
We see our fair young daughters, dead ;
Then hear us, O ye mighty ones !
Give us our daily bread.

'T is vain — with cold, unfeeling eye
Ye gaze on us, uncloth'd, unfed ;
'T is vain — ye will not hear our cry,
Nor give us daily bread.

We turn from you, our lords by birth,
To him who is our Lord above ;
We all are made of the same earth,
Are children of one love.

Then, Father of this world of wonders,
Judge of the living and the dead,
Lord of the lightnings and the thunders,
Give us our daily bread !

SUMMER DAYS

IN summer, when the days were long,
We walk'd, two friends, in field and wood ;
Our heart was light, our step was strong,
And life lay round us, fair as good,
In summer, when the days were long.

We stray'd from morn till evening came,
We gather'd flowers, and wove us crowns ;
We walk'd mid poppies red as flame,
Or sat upon the yellow downs,
And always wish'd our life the same.

In summer, when the days were long,
We leap'd the hedgerow, cross'd the brook ;
And still her voice flow'd forth in song,
Or else she read some graceful book,
In summer, when the days were long.

And then we sat beneath the trees,
With shadows lessening in the noon ;
And in the sunlight and the breeze
We revell'd, many a glorious June,
While larks were singing o'er the leas.

In summer, when the days were long,
We pluck'd wild strawberries, ripe and red,
Or feasted, with no grace but song,
On golden nectar, snow-white bread,
In summer, when the days were long.

We lov'd, and yet we knew it not,
For loving seem'd like breathing then ;
We found a heaven in every spot ;
Saw angels, too, in all good men,
And dream'd of gods in grove and grot.

In summer, when the days are long,
Alone I wander, muse alone ;
I see her not, but that old song
Under the fragrant wind is blown,
In summer, when the days are long.

Alone I wander in the wood,
But one fair spirit hears my sighs ;
And half I see the crimson hood,
The radiant hair, the calm glad eyes,
That charm'd me in life's summer mood.

In summer, when the days are long,
I love her as I lov'd of old ;
My heart is light, my step is strong,
For love brings back those hours of gold,
In summer, when the days are long.

Charles Weldon

THE POEM OF THE UNIVERSE

The Poem of the Universe
Nor rhythm has nor rhyme ;
Some God recites the wondrous song
A stanza at a time.

Great deeds is he foredoom'd to do,
With Freedom's flag unfurl'd,
Who hears the echo of that song
As it goes down the world.

Great words he is compell'd to speak
Who understands the song ;
He rises up like fifty men,
Fifty good men and strong.

A stanza for each century :
Now heed it, all who can !
Who hears it, he, and only he,
Is the elected man.

Emily Brontë

SONG

The linnet in the rocky dells,
The moor-lark in the air,
The bee among the heather bells
That hide my lady fair.

The wild deer browse above her breast ;
The wild birds raise their brood ;
And they, her smiles of love caress'd,
Have left her solitude.

I ween that, when the grave's dark wall
Did first her form retain,
They thought their hearts could ne'er recall
The light of joy again.

They thought the tide of grief would flow
Uncheck'd through future years ;
But where is all their anguish now,
And where are all their tears ?

Well, let them fight for honor's breath,
Or pleasure's shade pursue :
The dweller in the land of death
Is changed and careless too.

And, if their eyes should watch and weep
Till sorrow's source were dry,
She would not, in her tranquil sleep,
Return a single sigh.

Blow, west-wind, by the lonely mound,
And murmur, summer streams !
There is no need of other sound
To soothe my lady's dreams.

THE OLD STOIC

Riches I hold in light esteem,
And Love I laugh to scorn ;
And lust of fame was but a dream
That vanish'd with the morn ;

And if I pray, the only prayer
That moves my lips for me
Is, "Leave the heart that now I bear,
And give me liberty !"

Yes, as my swift days near their goal,
'T is all that I implore :
In life and death a chainless soul,
With courage to endure.

WARNING AND REPLY

In the earth—the earth—thou shalt be laid,
A gray stone standing over thee ;
Black mould beneath thee spread,
And black mould to cover thee.

"Well — there is rest there,
So fast come thy prophecy :

The time when my sunny hair
Shall with grass roots entwined be."

But cold — cold is that resting-place,
Shut out from joy and liberty,
And all who lov'd thy living face
Will shrink from it shudderingly.

"Not so. Here the world is chill,
And sworn friends fall from me;
But there — they will own me still,
And prize my memory."

Farewell, then, all that love,
All that deep sympathy:
Sleep on: Heaven laughs above,
Earth never misses thee.

Turf-sod and tombstone drear
Part human company;
One heart breaks only — here,
But that heart was worthy thee!

STANZAS

Often rebuk'd, yet always back returning
To those first feelings that were born with me,
And leaving busy chase of wealth and learning
For idle dreams of things which cannot be;

To-day, I will seek not the shadowy region;
Its unsustaining vastness waxes drear;
And visions rising, legion after legion,
Bring the unreal world too strangely near.

I'll walk, but not in old heroic traces,
And not in paths of high morality,
And not among the half-distinguish'd faces,
The clouded forms of long-past history.

I'll walk where my own nature would be leading:
It vexes me to choose another guide:
Where the gray flocks in ferny glens are feeding;
Where the wild wind blows on the mountain side.

What have those lonely mountains worth revealing?
More glory and more grief than I can tell:
The earth that wakes one human heart to feeling
Can centre both the worlds of Heaven and Hell.

HER LAST LINES

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life — that in me has rest,
As I — undying Life — have power in thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as wither'd weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thine infinity;
So surely anchor'd on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceas'd to be,
And Thou were left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
Thou — Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroy'd.

Mary Ann Evans (Lewes) Cross

("GEORGE ELIOT")

"O MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE"

Longum illud tempus, quum non ero, magis me movet, quam hoc exiguum. — *Cicero, ad Att.*, xii. 18.

O MAY I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence : live
In pulses stirr'd to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.
So to live is heaven :
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, fail'd, and agoniz'd
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child,
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolv'd ;
Its discords, quench'd by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobb'd religiously in yearning song,
That watch'd to ease the burthen of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better, — saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shap'd it forth before the multitude,
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mix'd with love, —
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gather'd like a scroll within the tomb
Unread forever.
This is life to come,
Which martyr'd men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of a good diffus'd,
And in diffusion ever more intense !
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

SONGS FROM "THE SPANISH GYPSY"

THE DARK

SHOULD I long that dark were fair ?
Say, O song,
Lacks my love aught, that I should long ?

Dark the night, with breath all flow'rs,
And tender broken voice that fills
With ravishment the listening hours :
Whisperings, wooings,
Liquid ripples and soft ring-dove cooings
In low-ton'd rhythm that love's aching stills.
Dark the night,
Yet is she bright,
For in her dark she brings the mystic star,
Trembling yet strong, as is the voice of love,
From some unknown afar.
O radiant Dark ! O darkly-fostered ray !
Thou hast a joy too deep for shallow Day.

SONG OF THE ZÍNCALI

ALL things journey : sun and moon,
Morning, noon, and afternoon,
Night and all her stars :
'Twixt the east and western bars
Round they journey,
Come and go.
We go with them !
For to roam and ever roam
Is the Zíncali's loved home.

Earth is good, the hillside breaks
By the ashen roots and makes
Hungry nostrils glad ;
Then we run till we are mad,
Like the horses,

And we cry,
None shall catch us!
Swift winds wing us — we are free —
Drink the air — we Zíncali!

Falls the snow: the pine-branch split,
Call the fire out, see it flit,
Through the dry leaves run,
Spread and glow, and make a sun
In the dark tent:
O warm dark!
Warm as conies!

Strong fire loves us, we are warm!
Who the Zíncali shall harm?

Onward journey: fires are spent;
Sunward, sunward! lift the tent,
Run before the rain,
Through the pass, along the plain.
Hurry, hurry,
Lift us, wind!
Like the horses.
For to roam and ever roam
Is the Zíncali's loved home.

Ernest Charles Jones

EARTH'S BURDENS

WHY groaning so, thou solid earth,
Though sprightly summer cheers?
Or is thine old heart dead to mirth?
Or art thou bow'd by years?

"Nor am I cold to summer's prime,
Nor knows my heart decay;
Nor am I bow'd by countless time,
Thou atom of a day!

"I lov'd to list when tree and tide
Their gentle music made,
And lightly on my sunny side
To feel the plough and spade.

"I lov'd to hold my liquid way
Through floods of living light;
To kiss the sun's bright hand by day,
And count the stars by night.

"I lov'd to hear the children's glee,
Around the cottage door,
And peasant's song right merrily
The glebe come ringing o'er.

"But man upon my back has roll'd
Such heavy loads of stone,
I scarce can grow the harvest gold:
'Tis therefore that I groan.

"And when the evening dew sinks mild
Upon my quiet breast,
I feel the tear of the houseless child
Break burning on my rest.

"Oh! where are all the hallow'd sweets,
The harmless joys I gave?
The pavement of your sordid streets
Are stones on Virtue's grave.

"And thick and fast as autumn leaves
My children drop away,
A gathering of unripen'd sheaves
By premature decay.

"Gaunt misery holds the cottage door,
And olden honor 's flown,
And slaves are slavish more and more:
'T is therefore that I groan."

John Ruskin

THE WRECK

ITS masts of might, its sails so free,
Had borne the scatheless keel
Through many a day of darken'd sea,
And many a storm of steel;
When all the winds were calm, it met
(With home-returning prore)
With the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore.

The crest of the conqueror
On many a brow was bright ;
The dew of many an exile's eye
Had dimm'd the dancing sight ;
And for love and for victory
One welcome was in store,
In the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore.

The voices of the night are mute
Beneath the moon's eclipse ;
The silence of the fitful flute
Is on the dying lips.
The silence of my lonely heart
Is kept forevermore
In the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore.

TRUST THOU THY LOVE

TRUST thou thy Love : if she be proud, is she not sweet ?
Trust thou thy Love : if she be mute, is she not pure ?
Lay thou thy soul full in her hands, low at her feet ; —
Fail, Sun and Breath ! — yet, for thy peace, *she* shall endure.

Ebenezer Jones

SONG OF THE KINGS OF GOLD

OURS all are marble halls,
Amid untrodden groves
Where music ever calls,
Where faintest perfume roves ;
And thousands toiling moan,
That gorgeous robes may fold
The haughty forms alone
Of us — the Kings of Gold.
(*Chorus.*)
We cannot count our slaves,
Nothing bounds our sway,
Our will destroys and saves,
We let, we create, we slay.
Ha ! ha ! who are Gods ?

Purple, and crimson, and blue,
Jewels, and silks, and pearl,
All splendors of form and hue,
Our charm'd existence furl ;
When dared shadow dim
The glow in our winecups roll'd ?
When droop'd the banquet-hymn
Rais'd for the Kings of Gold ?
(*Chorus.*)

The earth, the earth, is ours !
Its corn, its fruits, its wine,
Its sun, its rain, its flowers,
Ours, all, all ! — cannot shine
One sunlight ray, but where
Our mighty titles hold ;
Wherever life is, there
Possess the Kings of Gold.
(*Chorus.*)

And all on earth that lives,
Woman, and man, and child,
Us trembling homage gives ;
Aye trampled, sport-defil'd,
None dareth raise one frown,
Or slightest questioning hold ;
Our scorn but strikes them down
To adore the Kings of Gold.
(*Chorus.*)

. . . . . .

In a glorious sea of hate,
Eternal rocks we stand ;
Our joy is our lonely state,
And our trust, our own right hand ;
We frown, and nations shrink ;
They curse, but our swords are old ;
And the wine of their rage deep drink
The dauntless Kings of Gold.
(*Chorus.*)
We cannot count our slaves,
Nothing bounds our sway,
Our will destroys and saves,
We let, we create, we slay.
Ha ! ha ! who are Gods ?

THE FACE

THESE dreary hours of hopeless gloom
Are all of life I fain would know ;
I would but feel my life consume,
While bring they back mine ancient woe ;
For, midst the clouds of grief and shame
That crowd around, one face I see ;
It is the face I dare not name,
The face none ever name to me.

I saw it first when in the dance
Borne, like a falcon, down the hall,
He stay'd to cure some rude mischance
My girlish deeds had caused to fall ;
He smil'd, he danced with me, he made
A thousand ways to soothe my pain ;
And sleeplessly all night I pray'd
That I might see that smile again.

I saw it next, a thousand times ;
And every time its kind smile near'd ;
Oh ! twice ten thousand glorious chimes
My heart rang out, when he appear'd ;
What was I then, that others' thought
Could alter so my thought of him;
That I could be by others taught
His image from my heart to dim !

I saw it last, when black and white
Shadows went struggling o'er it wild ;
When he regain'd my long-lost sight,
And I with cold obeisance smil'd ;—
I did not see it fade from life ;
My letters o'er his heart they found ;
They told me in death's last hard strife
His dying hands around them wound.

Although my scorn that face did maim,
Even when its love would not depart ;
Although my laughter smote its shame
And drave it swording through his heart ;
Although its death-gloom grasps my brain
With crushing unrefus'd despair ;
That I may dream that face again
God still must find alone my prayer.

THE RHAPSODISTS

Philip James Bailey

FROM "FESTUS"

YOUTH, LOVE, AND DEATH

Lucifer. And we might trust these youths and maidens fair,
The world was made for nothing but love, love.
Now I think it was made most to be burn'd.
Festus. The night is glooming on us. It is the hour
When lovers will speak lowly, for the sake
Of being nigh each other ; and when love
Shoots up the eye, like morning on the east,
Making amends for the long northern night
They pass'd, ere either knew the other lov'd ;
The hour of hearts ! Say gray-beards what they please,
The heart of age is like an emptied wine-cup ;
Its life lies in a heel-tap : how can age judge ?
'T were a waste of time to ask how they wasted theirs ;
But while the blood is bright, breath sweet, skin smooth,
And limbs all made to minister delight ;
Ere yet we have shed our locks, like trees their leaves,
And we stand staring bare into the air ;
He is a fool who is not for love and beauty.
It is I, the young, to the young speak. I am of them,
And always shall be. What are years to me ?
You traitor years, that fang the hands ye have lick'd,
Vicelike ; henceforth your venom-sacs are gone.
I have conquer'd. Ye shall perish : yea, shall fall

Like birdlets beaten by some resistless storm
'Gainst a dead wall, dead. I pity ye, that such
Mean things should have rais'd in man or hope or fear;
Those Titans of the heart that fight at heaven,
And sleep, by fits, on fire, whose slightest stir 's
An earthquake. I am bound and bless'd to youth.
None but the brave and beautiful can love.
Oh give me to the young, the fair, the free,
The brave, who would breast a rushing, burning world
Which came between him and his heart's delight.
Mad must I be, and what 's the world? Like mad
For itself. And I to myself am all things, too.
If my heart thunder'd would the world rock? Well,
Then let the mad world fight its shadow down.
Soon there may be nor sun nor world nor shadow.
But thou, my blood, my bright red running soul,
Rejoice thou like a river in thy rapids.
Rejoice, thou wilt never pale with age, nor thin;
But in thy full dark beauty, vein by vein
Serpent-wise, me encircling, shalt to the end
Throb, bubble, sparkle, laugh, and leap along.
Make merry, heart, while the holidays shall last.
Better than daily dwine, break sharp with life;
Like a stag, sunstruck, top thy bounds and die.
Heart, I could tear thee out, thou fool, thou fool,
And strip thee into shreds upon the wind.
What have I done that thou shouldst maze me thus?

Lucifer. Let us away; we have had enough of hearts.

Festus. Oh for the young heart like a fountain playing,
Flinging its bright fresh feelings up to the skies
It loves and strives to reach; strives, loves in vain.
It is of earth, and never meant for heaven,
Let us love both and die. The sphinx-like heart
Loathes life the moment that life's riddle is read.
The knot of our existence solv'd, all things
Loose-ended lie, and useless. Life is had,
And lo! we sigh, and say, can this be all?
It is not what we thought; it is very well,
But we want something more. There is but death.
And when we have said and seen, done, had, enjoy'd
And suffer'd, maybe, all we have wish'd or fear'd,
From fame to ruin, and from love to loathing,
There can come but one more change — try it — death.
Oh! it is great to feel that nought of earth,
Hope, love, nor dread, nor care for what 's to come,
Can check the royal lavishment of life;
But, like a streamer strown upon the wind,
We fling our souls to fate and to the future.
For to die young is youth's divinest gift;
To pass from one world fresh into another,
Ere change hath lost the charm of soft regret,
And feel the immortal impulse from within
Which makes the coming life cry alway, on!
And follow it while strong, is heaven's last mercy.
There is a fire-fly in the south, but shines
When on the wing. So is 't with mind. When once
We rest, we darken. On! saith God to the soul,
As unto the earth for ever. On it goes,
A rejoicing native of the infinite,
As is a bird, of air; an orb, of heaven.

THE POET

Festus. Thanks, thanks! With the Muse is always love and light,
And self-sworn loyalty to truth. For know,
Poets are all who love, who feel, great truths,
And tell them: and the truth of truths is love.
There was a time — oh, I remember well!

When, like a sea-shell with its sea-born strain,
My soul aye rang with music of the lyre,
And my heart shed its lore as leaves their dew —
A honey dew, and throve on what it shed.
All things I lov'd ; but song I lov'd in chief.
Imagination is the air of mind,
Judgment its earth and memory its main,
Passion its fire. I was at home in heaven.
Swiftlike, I liv'd above ; once touching earth,
The meanest thing might master me : long wings
But baffled. Still and still I harp'd on song.
Oh ! to create within the mind is bliss,
And shaping forth the lofty thought, or lovely,
We seek not, need not heaven : and when the thought,
Cloudy and shapeless, first forms on the mind,
Slow darkening into some gigantic make,
How the heart shakes with pride and fear, as heaven
Quakes under its own thunder ; or as might,
Of old, the mortal mother of a god,
When first she saw him lessening up the skies.
And I began the toil divine of verse,
Which, like a burning bush, doth guest a god.
But this was only wing-flapping — not flight ;
The pawing of the courser ere he win ;
Till by degrees, from wrestling with my soul,
I gather'd strength to keep the fleet thoughts fast,
And made them bless me. Yes, there was a time
When tomes of ancient song held eye and heart ;
Were the sole lore I reck'd of : the great bards
Of Greece, of Rome, and mine own master land,
And they who in the holy book are deathless ;
Men who have vulgariz'd sublimity,
And bought up truth for the nations ; held it whole ;
Men who have forged gods — utter'd — made them pass :
Sons of the sons of God, who in olden days
Did leave their passionless heaven for earth and woman,
Brought an immortal to a mortal breast,
And, rainbowlike the sweet earth clasping, left
A bright precipitate of soul, which lives
Ever, and through the lines of sullen men,
The dumb array of ages, speaks for all ;
Flashing by fits, like fire from an enemy's front ;
Whose thoughts, like bars of sunshine in shut rooms,
Mid gloom, all glory, win the world to light ;
Who make their very follies like their souls,
And like the young moon with a ragged edge,
Still in their imperfection beautiful ;
Whose weaknesses are lovely as their strengths,
Like the white nebulous matter between stars,
Which, if not light, at least is likest light ;
Men whom we build our love round like an arch
Of triumph, as they pass us on their way
To glory, and to immortality ;
Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion,
Through every limb and the whole heart ; whose words
Haunt us, as eagles haunt the mountain air ;
Whose thoughts command all coming times and minds,
As from a tower, a warden — fix themselves
Deep in the heart as meteor stones in earth,
Dropp'd from some higher sphere : the words of gods,
And fragments of the undeem'd tongues of heaven ;
Men who walk up to fame as to a friend,
Or their own house, which from the wrongful heir
They have wrested, from the world's hard hand and gripe ;
Men who, like death, all bone but all unarm'd,
Have ta'en the giant world by the throat, and thrown him,

And made him swear to maintain their name and fame
At peril of his life ; who shed great thoughts
As easily as an oak looseneth its golden leaves
In a kindly largesse to the soil it grew on ;
Whose names are ever on the world's broad tongue,
Like sound upon the falling of a force ;
Whose words, if wing'd, are with angels' wings ;
Who play upon the heart as on a harp,
And make our eyes bright as we speak of them ;
Whose hearts have a look southwards, and are open
To the whole noon of nature ; these I have wak'd,
And wept o'er, night by night ; oft pondering thus :
Homer is gone : and where is Jove ? and where
The rival cities seven ? His song outlives
Time, tower, and god — all that then was, save heaven.

HELEN'S SONG

The rose is weeping for her love,
The nightingale ;
And he is flying fast above,
To her he will not fail.
Already golden eve appears ;
He wings his way along ;
Ah ! look, he comes to kiss her tears,
And soothe her with his song.

The moon in pearly light may steep
The still blue air ;
The rose hath ceas'd to droop and weep,
For lo ! her love is there ;
He sings to her, and o'er the trees
She hears his sweet notes swim ;
The world may weary ; she but sees
Her love, and hears but him.

LUCIFER AND ELISSA

Elissa. Nigh one year ago,
I watch'd that large bright star, much where 't is now :
Time hath not touch'd its everlasting lightning,
Nor dimm'd the glorious glances of its eye ;
Nor passion clouded it, nor any star
Eclips'd ; it is the leader still of heaven.
And I who lov'd it then can love it now ;
But am not what I was, in one degree.
Calm star ! who was it nam'd thee Lucifer,
From him who drew the third of heaven down with him ?
Oh ! it was but the tradition of thy beauty !
For if the sun hath one part, and the moon one,
Thou hast the third part of the host of heaven —
Which is its power — which power is but its beauty !
Lucifer. It was no tradition, lady, but of truth !
Elissa. I thought we parted last to meet no more.
Lucifer. It was so, lady ; but it is not so.
Elissa. Am I to leave, or thou, then ?
Lucifer. Neither, yet.
Elissa. And who art thou that I should fear and serve ?
Lucifer. I am the morning and the evening star,
The star thou lovedst ; thy lover too ; as once
I told thee incredulous ; star and spirit I am ;
A power, an ill which doth outbalance being.
Behold life's tyrant evil, peer of good,
The great infortune of the universe.
Am I not more than mortal in my form ?
Millions of years have circled round my brow,
Like worlds upon their centres, — still I live,
And age but presses with a halo's weight.
This single arm hath dash'd the light of heaven ;
This one hand dragg'd the angels from their thrones : —
Am I not worthy to have lov'd thee, lady ?
Thou mortal model of all heavenliness !
Yet all these spoils have I abandon'd, cower'd
My powers, my course becalm'd, and stoop'd from the high
Destruction of the skies for thee, and him
Who loving thee is with thee lost, both lost.
Thou hast but serv'd the purpose of the fiend ;
Art but the gilded vessel of selfish sin
Whose poison hath drunken made a soul to death :
Thou, useless now. I come to bid thee die.

Elissa. Wicked, impure, tormentor of the world,
I knew thee not. Yet doubt not thou it was
Who darkenedst for a moment with base aim
God to evade, and shun in this world, man,
Love's heart; with selfish end alone redeeming
Me from the evil, the death-fright. Take, nathless,
One human soul's forgiveness, such the sum
Of thanks I feel for heaven's great grace that thou
From the overflowings of love's cup mayst quench
Thy breast's broad burning desert, and fertilize
Aught may be in it, that boasts one root of good.
Lucifer. It is doubtless sad to feel one day our last.
Elissa. I knew, forewarn'd, I was dying. God is good.
The heavens grow darker as they purer grow,
And both, as we approach them; so near death
The soul grows darker and diviner hourly.
Could I love less, I should be happier now.
But always 't is to that mad extreme, death
Alone appears the fitting end to bliss
Like that my spirit presseth for.
Lucifer. Thy death
Gentle shall be as e'er hath been thy life.
I 'll hurt thee not, for once upon this breast,
Fell, like a snowflake on a fever'd lip,
Thy love. Thy soul shall, dreamlike, pass from thee.
One instant, and thou wakest in heaven for aye.
Elissa. Lost, say'st thou in one breath, and sav'd in heaven.
. . . . . .
I ever thought thee to be more than mortal,
And since thus mighty, grant me — and thou mayst
This one, this only boon, as friend to friend —
Bring him I love, one moment ere I die;
Life, love, all his. . . .
Lucifer. Cease!
As a wind-flaw, darting from some rifted cloud,
Seizes upon a water-patch mid main,
And into white wrath worries it, so my mind
This petty controversy distracts. He comes,
I say, but never shalt thou view him, living.
Elissa. But I will, will see him, and while I am alive.
I hear him. He is come.
Lucifer. The ends of things
Are urgent. Still, to this mortuary deed
Reluctant, fix I death's black seal. He 's here!
Elissa. I hear him; he is come; it is he; it is he!
Lucifer. Die graciously, as ever thou hast liv'd;
Die, thou shalt never look upon him again.
Elissa. My love! haste, Festus! I am dying.
Lucifer. Dead!
As ocean racing fast and fierce to reach
Some headland, ere the moon with maddening ray
Forestall him, and rebellious tides excite
To vain strife, nor of the innocent skiff that thwarts
His path, aught heeds, but with dispiteous foam
Wrecks deathful, I, made hasty by time's end
Impending, thus fill up fate's tragic form.
A word could kill her. See, she hath gone to heaven.

Dora Greenwell

A SONG OF FAREWELL

The Spring will come again, dear friends,
The swallow o'er the sea;
The bud will hang upon the bough,
The blossom on the tree;
And many a pleasant sound will rise to greet her on her way,
The voice of bird, and leaf, and stream, and warm winds in their play;
Ah! sweet the airs that round her breathe! and bountiful is she,

She bringeth all the things that fresh, and sweet, and hopeful be ;
She scatters promise on the earth with open hand and free,
But not for me, my friends,
But not for me !

Summer will come again, dear friends,
Low murmurs of the bee
Will rise through the long sunny day
Above the flowery lea ;
And deep the dreamy woods will own the slumbrous spell she weaves,
And send a greeting, mix'd with sighs, through all their quivering leaves.
Oh, precious are her glowing gifts ! and plenteous is she,
She bringeth all the lovely things that bright and fragrant be,
She scatters fulness on the Earth with lavish hand and free,
But not for me, my friends,
But not for me !

Autumn will come again, dear friends,
His spirit-touch shall be
With gold upon the harvest-field,
With crimson on the tree ;
He passeth o'er the silent woods, they wither at his breath,
Slow fading in a still decay, a change that is not Death.
Oh ! rich and liberal, and wise, and provident is he !
He taketh to his garner-house the things that ripen'd be,
He gathereth his store from Earth, and silently —
And he will gather me, my friends,
He will gather me !

TO CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Thou hast fill'd me a golden cup
With a drink divine that glows,
With the bloom that is flowing up
From the heart of the folded rose.
The grapes in their amber glow,
And the strength of the blood-red wine,
All mingle and change and flow
In this golden cup of thine,
With the scent of the curling vine,
With the balm of the rose's breath, —
For the voice of love is thine,
And thine is the Song of Death !

George Macdonald

LIGHT

Thou art the joy of age :
Thy sun is dear when long the shadow falls.
Forth to its friendliness the old man crawls,
And, like the bird hung out in his poor cage
To gather song from radiance, in his chair
Sits by the door ; and sitteth there
His soul within him, like a child that lies
Half dreaming, with half-open eyes,
At close of a long afternoon in summer —
High ruins round him, ancient ruins, where
The raven is almost the only comer ;
Half dreams, half broods, in wonderment
At thy celestial descent,
Through rifted loops alighting on the gold
That waves its bloom in many an airy rent :
So dreams the old man's soul, that is not old,
But sleepy 'mid the ruins that enfold.
What soul-like changes, evanescent moods,
Upon the face of the still passive earth,
Its hills, and fields, and woods,
Thou with thy seasons and thy hours art ever calling forth !
Even like a lord of music bent
Over his instrument,
Who gives to tears and smiles an equal birth !
When clear as holiness the morning ray
Casts the rock's dewy darkness at its feet,
Mottling with shadows all the mountain gray ;
When, at the hour of sovereign noon,
Infinite silent cataracts sheet
Shadowless through the air of thunder-breeding June ;
And when a yellower glory slanting passes
'Twixt longer shadows o'er the meadow grasses ;

When now the moon lifts up her shining shield,
High on the peak of a cloud-hill reveal'd ;
Now crescent, low, wandering, sun-dazed away,
Unconscious of her own star-mingled ray,
Her still face seeming more to think than see,
Makes the pale world lie dreaming dreams of thee !
No mood of mind, no melody of soul,
But lies within thy silent soft control.

Of operative single power,
And simple unity the one emblem,
Yet all the colors that our passionate eyes devour,
In rainbow, moonbow, or in opal gem,
Are the melodious descant of divided thee.
Lo thee in yellow sands ! lo thee
In the blue air and sea !
In the green corn, with scarlet poppies lit,
Thy half souls parted, patient thou dost sit.
Lo thee in speechless glories of the west !
Lo thee in dewdrop's tiny breast !
Thee on the vast white cloud that floats away,
Bearing upon its skirt a brown moon-ray !
Regent of color, thou dost fling
Thy overflowing skill on everything !
The thousand hues and shades upon the flowers
Are all the pastime of thy leisure hours ;
And all the jewelled ores in mines that hidden be
Are dead till touch'd by thee.

WORLD AND SOUL

This infant world has taken long to make !
Nor hast Thou done the making of it yet,
But wilt be working on when death has set
A new mound in some church-yard for my sake.
On flow the centuries without a break ;
Uprise the mountains, ages without let ;
The lichens suck the rock's breast — food they get :
Years more than past, the young earth yet will take.
But in the dumbness of the rolling time,
No veil of silence shall encompass me :
Thou wilt not once forget and let me be ;
Rather wouldst Thou some old chaotic prime
Invade, and, with a tenderness sublime,
Unfold a world, that I, thy child, might see.

BABY

Where did you come from, baby dear ?
Out of the everywhere into the here.

Where did you get those eyes so blue ?
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin ?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear ?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high ?
A soft hand strok'd it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose ?
I saw something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-corner'd smile of bliss ?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear ?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands ?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things ?
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.

How did they all just come to be you ?
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear ?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

SONG

I dream'd that I woke from a dream,
And the house was full of light ;
At the window two angel Sorrows
Held back the curtains of night.

The door was wide, and the house
Was full of the morning wind ;
At the door two armed warders
Stood silent, with faces blind.

I ran to the open door,
For the wind of the world was sweet ;
The warders with crossing weapons
Turn'd back my issuing feet.

I ran to the shining windows —
There the winged Sorrows stood ;
Silent they held the curtains,
And the light fell through in a flood.

I clomb to the highest window —
Ah ! there, with shadow'd brow,
Stood one lonely radiant Sorrow,
And that, my love, was thou.

Gerald Massey

THE DESERTER FROM THE CAUSE

He is gone : better so. We should know who stand under
Our banner : let none but the trusty remain !
For there 's stern work at hand, and the time comes shall sunder
The shell from the pearl, and the chaff from the grain.
And the heart that through danger and death will be dutiful,
Soul that with Cranmer in fire would shake hands,
With a life like a palace-home built for the beautiful,
Freedom of all her beloved demands.

He is gone from us ! Yet shall we march on victorious,
Hearts burning like beacons — eyes fix'd on the goal !
And if we fall fighting, we fall like the glorious,
With face to the stars, and all heaven in the soul.
And aye for the brave stir of battle we 'll barter
The sword of life sheath'd in the peace of the grave ;
And better the fieriest fate of the martyr,
Than live like the coward, and die like the slave !

CHRISTIE'S PORTRAIT

Your tiny picture makes me yearn ;
We are so far apart !
My darling, I can only turn
And kiss you in my heart.
A thousand tender thoughts a-wing
Swarm in a summer clime,
And hover round it murmuring
Like bees at honey-time.

Upon a little girl I look
Whose pureness makes me sad ;
I read as in a holy book,
I grow in secret glad.
It seems my darling comes to me
With something I have lost
Over life's toss'd and troubled sea,
On some celestial coast.

I think of her when spirit-bow'd ;
A glory fills the place !
Like sudden light on swords, the proud
Smile flashes in my face :
And others see, in passing by,
But cannot understand
The vision shining in mine eye,
My strength of heart and hand.

That grave content and touching grace
Bring tears into mine eyes ;
She makes my heart a holy place
Where hymns and incense rise.
Such calm her gentle spirit brings
As, smiling overhead,
White-statued saints with peaceful wings
Shadow the sleeping dead.

Our Christie is no rosy Grace
With beauty all may see,
But I have never felt a face
Grow half so dear to me.
No curling hair about her brows,
Like many merry girls ;
Well, straighter to my heart it goes,
And round it curls and curls.

Meek as the wood anemone glints
To see if heaven be blue,
Is my pale flower with her sweet tints
Of heaven shining through.

She will be poor and never fret,
  Sleep sound and lowly lie ;
Will live her quiet life, and let
  The great world-storm go by.

Dear love ! God keep her in his grasp,
  Meek maiden, or brave wife,
Till his good angels softly clasp
  Her closed book of life !
And this fair picture of the sun,
  With birthday blessings given,
Shall fade before a glorious one
  Taken of her in heaven.

HIS BANNER OVER ME

SURROUNDED by unnumber'd foes,
Against my soul the battle goes !
Yet though I weary, sore distrest,
I know that I shall reach my rest :
  I lift my tearful eyes above, —
  His banner over me is love.

Its sword my spirit will not yield,
Though flesh may faint upon the field ;
He waves before my fading sight
The branch of palm, — the crown of light ;
  I lift my brightening eyes above, —
  His banner over me is love.

My cloud of battle-dust may dim,
His veil of splendor curtain him !
And in the midnight of my fear
I may not feel him standing near ;
  But, as I lift mine eyes above,
  His banner over me is love.

Alexander Smith

FROM "A LIFE-DRAMA"

FORERUNNERS

Walter. I have a strain of a departed bard ;
One who was born too late into this world.
A mighty day was past, and he saw nought
But ebbing sunset and the rising stars, —
Still o'er him rose those melancholy stars !
Unknown his childhood, save that he was born
'Mong woodland waters full of silver breaks ;
. . . . . .
I was to him but Labrador to Ind ;
His pearls were plentier than my pebble-stones.
He was the sun, I was that squab — the earth,
And bask'd me in his light until he drew
Flowers from my barren sides. Oh ! he was rich,
And I rejoiced upon his shore of pearls,
A weak enamor'd sea. Once he did say,
"My Friend ! a Poet must ere long arise,
And with a regal song sun-crown this age,
As a saint's head is with a halo crown'd ; —
One, who shall hallow Poetry to God
And to its own high use, for Poetry is
The grandest chariot wherein king-thoughts ride ; —
One, who shall fervent grasp the sword of song,
As a stern swordsman grasps his keenest blade,
To find the quickest passage to the heart.
A mighty Poet, whom this age shall choose
To be its spokesman to all coming times.
In the ripe full-blown season of his soul,
He shall go forward in his spirit's strength,
And grapple with the questions of all time,
And wring from them their meanings. As King Saul
Call'd up the buried prophet from his grave
To speak his doom, so shall this Poet-king
Call up the dead Past from its awful grave
To tell him of our future. As the air
Doth sphere the world, so shall his heart of love —
Loving mankind, not peoples. As the lake
Reflects the flower, tree, rock, and bending heaven,
Shall he reflect our great humanity ;
And as the young Spring breathes with living breath
On a dead branch, till it sprouts fragrantly
Green leaves and sunny flowers, shall he breathe life
Through every theme he touch, making all Beauty
And Poetry for ever like the stars."
His words set me on fire ; I cried aloud,

"Gods! what a portion to forerun this Soul!"
He grasp'd my hand, — I look'd upon his face, —
A thought struck all the blood into his cheeks,
Like a strong buffet. His great flashing eyes
Burn'd on mine own. He said, "A grim old king,
Whose blood leap'd madly when the trumpets bray'd
To joyous battle 'mid a storm of steeds,
Won a rich kingdom on a battle-day;
But in the sunset he was ebbing fast,
Ring'd by his weeping lords. His left hand held
His white steed, to the belly splash'd with blood,
That seem'd to mourn him with its drooping head;
His right, his broken brand; and in his ear
His old victorious banners flap the winds.
He called his faithful herald to his side, —
'Go! tell the dead I come!' With a proud smile,
The warrior with a stab let out his soul,
Which fled and shriek'd through all the other world,
'Ye dead! My master comes!' And there was pause
Till the great shade should enter. Like that herald,
Walter, I'd rush across this waiting world
And cry, '*He* comes!'" Lady, wilt hear the song? [*Sings.*

A MINOR POET

He sat one winter 'neath a linden tree
In my bare orchard; "See, my friend," he said,
"The stars among the branches hang like fruit,
So, hopes were thick within me. When I'm gone
The world will like a valuator sit
Upon my soul, and say, 'I was a cloud
That caught its glory from a sunken sun,
And gradual burn'd into its native gray.'"
On an October eve, 't was his last wish
To see again the mists and golden woods;
Upon his death-bed he was lifted up,
The slumb'rous sun within the lazy west
With their last gladness fill'd his dying eyes.
No sooner was he hence than critic-worms
Were swarming on the body of his fame,
And thus they judged the dead: "This Poet was
An April tree whose vermeil-loaded boughs
Promis'd to Autumn apples juiced and red,
But never came to fruit." "He is to us
But a rich odor, — a faint music-swell."
"Poet he was not in the larger sense;
He could write pearls, but he could never write
A Poem round and perfect as a star."
"Politic, i' faith. His most judicious act
Was dying when he did; the next five years
Had finger'd all the fine dust from his wings,
And left him poor as we. He died — 't was shrewd!
And came with all his youth and unblown hopes
On the world's heart, and touch'd it into tears."

SEA-MARGE

The lark is singing in the blinding sky,
Hedges are white with May. The bridegroom sea
Is toying with the shore, his wedded bride,
And, in the fulness of his marriage joy,
He decorates her tawny brow with shells,
Retires a space, to see how fair she looks,
Then proud, runs up to kiss her. All is fair —
All glad, from grass to sun! Yet more I love
Than this, the shrinking day that sometimes comes
In Winter's front, so fair 'mong its dark peers,
It seems a straggler from the files of June,
Which in its wanderings had lost its wits,
And half its beauty; and, when it return'd,
Finding its old companions gone away,
It join'd November's troop, then marching past;
And so the frail thing comes, and greets the world
With a thin crazy smile, then bursts in tears,
And all the while it holds within its hand
A few half-wither'd flowers. I love and pity it!

BEAUTY

BEAUTY still walketh on the earth and air,
Our present sunsets are as rich in gold
As ere the Iliad's music was out-roll'd ;
The roses of the Spring are ever fair,
'Mong branches green still ring-doves coo and pair,
And the deep sea still foams its music old.
So, if we are at all divinely soul'd,
This beauty will unloose our bonds of care.
'T is pleasant, when blue skies are o'er us bending
Within old starry-gated Poesy,
To meet a soul set to no worldly tune,
Like thine, sweet Friend ! Oh, dearer this to me
Than are the dewy trees, the sun, the moon,
Or noble music with a golden ending.

TO ——

THE broken moon lay in the autumn sky,
And I lay at thy feet ;
You bent above me ; in the silence I
Could hear my wild heart beat.

I spoke ; my soul was full of trembling fears
At what my words would bring :
You rais'd your face, your eyes were full of tears,
As the sweet eyes of Spring.

You kiss'd me then, I worshipp'd at thy feet
Upon the shadowy sod.
Oh, fool, I lov'd thee ! lov'd thee, lovely cheat !
Better than Fame or God.

My soul leap'd up beneath thy timid kiss ;
What then to me were groans,
Or pain, or death ? Earth was a round of bliss,
I seem'd to walk on thrones.

And you were with me 'mong the rushing wheels,
'Mid Trade's tumultuous jars ;
And where to awe-struck wilds the Night reveals
Her hollow gulfs of stars.

Before your window, as before a shrine,
I 've knelt 'mong dew-soak'd flowers,
While distant music-bells, with voices fine,
Measur'd the midnight hours.

There came a fearful moment : I was pale,
You wept, and never spoke,
But clung around me as the woodbine frail
Clings, pleading, round an oak.

Upon my wrong I steadied up my soul,
And flung thee from myself ;
I spurn'd thy love as 't were a rich man's dole, —
It was my only wealth.

I spurn'd thee ! I, who lov'd thee, could have died,
That hop'd to call thee " wife,"
And bear thee, gently-smiling at my side,
Through all the shocks of life !

Too late, thy fatal beauty and thy tears,
Thy vows, thy passionate breath ;
I 'll meet thee not in Life, nor in the spheres
Made visible by Death.

EARLY HYMNODY

(*See also :* S. F. ADAMS, ALFORD, E. B. BROWNING, H. COLERIDGE, DE VERE, FOX, MARTINEAU, NEWMAN)

James Montgomery

AT HOME IN HEAVEN

" FOREVER with the Lord ! "
Amen, so let it be ;
Life from the dead is in that word,
'T is immortality.

Here in the body pent,
Absent from him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent
A day's march nearer home.

My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul, how near
At times, to faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy golden gates appear!

Ah! then my spirit faints
To reach the land I love,
The bright inheritance of saints,
Jerusalem above.

Yet clouds will intervene,
And all my prospect flies;
Like Noah's dove, I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.

Anon the clouds dispart,
The winds and waters cease,
While sweetly o'er my gladden'd heart
Expands the bow of peace.

Beneath its glowing arch,
Along the hallow'd ground,
I see cherubic armies march,
A camp of fire around.

I hear at morn and even,
At noon and midnight hour,
The choral harmonies of heaven
Earth's Babel-tongues o'erpower.

Then, then I feel that he,
Remember'd or forgot,
The Lord, is never far from me,
Though I perceive him not.

Charlotte Elliott

JUST AS I AM

JUST as I am, without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though toss'd about,
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am — thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, of that free love,
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,
Here for a season, then above,
O Lamb of God, I come!

LET ME BE WITH THEE

LET me be with thee where thou art,
My Saviour, my eternal rest!
Then only will this longing heart
Be fully and forever blest.

Let me be with thee where thou art,
Thy unveil'd glory to behold;
Then only will this wandering heart
Cease to be treacherous, faithless, cold.

Let me be with thee where thou art,
Where spotless saints thy name adore;
Then only will this sinful heart
Be evil and defil'd no more.

Let me be with thee where thou art,
Where none can die, where none remove;
There neither death nor life will part
Me from thy presence and thy love!

James Edmeston

PRAYER TO THE TRINITY

LEAD us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea ;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but thee ;
Yet possessing
Every blessing,
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us ;
All our weakness thou dost know ;
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe ;
Lone and dreary,
Faint and weary,
Through the desert thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy ;
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy :
Thus provided,
Pardon'd, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.

Henry Hart Milman

HYMN FOR THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

WHEN our heads are bow'd with woe,
When our bitter tears o'erflow,
When we mourn the lost, the dear :
Gracious Son of Mary, hear !

Thou our throbbing flesh hast worn,
Thou our mortal griefs hast borne,
Thou hast shed the human tear :
Gracious Son of Mary, hear !

When the sullen death-bell tolls
For our own departed souls—
When our final doom is near,
Gracious Son of Mary, hear !

Thou hast bow'd the dying head,
Thou the blood of life hast shed,
Thou hast fill'd a mortal bier :
Gracious Son of Mary, hear !

When the heart is sad within
With the thought of all its sin,
When the spirit shrinks with fear,
Gracious Son of Mary, hear !

Thou the shame, the grief hast known ;
Though the sins were not Thine own,
Thou hast deign'd their load to bear :
Gracious Son of Mary, hear !

BURIAL HYMN

BROTHER, thou art gone before us,
And thy saintly soul is flown
Where tears are wip'd from every eye,
And sorrow is unknown.
From the burden of the flesh,
And from care and sin releas'd,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

The toilsome way thou 'st travell'd o'er,
And hast borne the heavy load ;
But Christ hath taught thy wandering feet
To reach his bless'd abode ;
Thou 'rt sleeping now, like Lazarus,
On his Father's faithful breast,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

Sin can never taint thee now,
Nor can doubt thy faith assail ;
Nor thy meek trust in Jesus Christ
And the Holy Spirit fail ;
And there thou 'rt sure to meet the good,
Whom on earth thou lovest best,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

"Earth to earth," and "dust to dust,"
Thus the solemn priest hath said ;
So we lay the turf above thee now,
And seal thy narrow bed ;

But thy spirit, brother, soars away
  Among the faithful blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
  And the weary are at rest.

And when the Lord shall summon us
  Whom thou now hast left behind,
May we, untainted by the world,
  As sure a welcome find ;
May each, like thee, depart in peace,
  To be a glorious, happy guest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
  And the weary are at rest.

RIDE ON IN MAJESTY

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
  In lowly pomp ride on to die ;
O Christ, thy triumphs now begin
O'er captive death and conquer'd sin !

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
The winged armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
The last and fiercest strife is nigh ;
The Father on his sapphire throne
Expects his own anointed Son.

Ride on ! ride on in majesty !
In lowly pomp ride on to die ;
Bow thy meek head to mortal pain,
Then take, O God, thy power, and reign !

John Keble

WHO RUNS MAY READ

There is a book, who runs may read,
  Which heavenly truth imparts,
And all the lore its scholars need,
  Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The works of God above, below,
  Within us and around,
Are pages in that book, to show
  How God himself is found.

The glorious sky, embracing all,
  Is like the Maker's love,
Wherewith encompass'd, great and small
  In peace and order move.

The moon above, the Church below,
  A wondrous race they run,
But all their radiance, all their glow,
  Each borrows of its sun.

The Saviour lends the light and heat
  That crowns his holy hill ;
The saints, like stars, around his seat,
  Perform their courses still.

The saints above are stars in heaven —
  What are the saints on earth ?
Like trees they stand whom God has given,
  Our Eden's happy birth.

Faith is their fix'd unswerving root,
  Hope their unfading flower,
Fair deeds of charity their fruit,
  The glory of their bower.

The dew of heaven is like thy grace.
  It steals in silence down ;
But where it lights, the favor'd place
  By richest fruits is known.

One Name, above all glorious names,
  With its ten thousand tongues
The everlasting sea proclaims,
  Echoing angelic songs.

The raging fire, the roaring wind,
  Thy boundless power display :
But in the gentler breeze we find
  Thy spirit's viewless way.

Two worlds are ours : 't is only sin
  Forbids us to descry
The mystic heaven and earth within,
  Plain as the sea and sky.

Thou, who hast given me eyes to see
  And love this sight so fair,
Give me a heart to find out thee,
  And read thee everywhere.

SEED TIME HYMN

LORD, in thy name thy servants plead,
And thou hast sworn to hear ;
Thine is the harvest, thine the seed,
The fresh and fading year :

Our hope, when autumn winds blew wild,
We trusted, Lord, with thee ;
And still, now spring has on us smil'd,
We wait on thy decree.

The former and the latter rain,
The summer sun and air,
The green ear, and the golden grain,
All thine, are ours by prayer.

Thine too by right, and ours by grace,
The wondrous growth unseen,
The hopes that soothe, the fears that brace,
The love that shines serene.

So grant the precious things brought forth
By sun and moon below,
That thee in thy new heaven and earth
We never may forego.

HOLY MATRIMONY

THE voice that breath'd o'er Eden,
That earliest wedding-day,
The primal marriage blessing,
It hath not pass'd away.

Still in the pure espousal
Of Christian man and maid,
The holy Three are with us,
The threefold grace is said.

For dower of blessed children,
For love and faith's sweet sake,
For high mysterious union,
Which nought on earth may break.

Be present, awful Father,
To give away this bride,
As Eve thou gav'st to Adam
Out of his own pierced side :

Be present, Son of Mary,
To join their loving hands,
As thou didst bind two natures
In thine eternal bands :

Be present, Holiest Spirit,
To bless them as they kneel,
As thou for Christ, the Bridegroom,
The heavenly Spouse dost seal.

Oh, spread thy pure wing o'er them,
Let no ill power find place,
When onward to thine altar
The hallow'd path they trace,

To cast their crowns before thee
In perfect sacrifice,
Till to the home of gladness
With Christ's own Bride they rise. AMEN.

Sir John Bowring

FROM THE RECESSES

FROM the recesses of a lowly spirit
My humble prayer ascends : O Father ! hear it.
Upsoaring on the wings of fear and meekness,
Forgive its weakness.

I know, I feel, how mean and how unworthy
The trembling sacrifice I pour before thee ;
What can I offer in thy presence holy,
But sin and folly ?

For in thy sight, who every bosom viewest,
Cold are our warmest vows and vain our truest ;
Thoughts of a hurrying hour ; our lips repeat them,
Our hearts forget them.

We see thy hand — it leads us, it supports us ;
We hear thy voice — it counsels and it courts us ;
And then we turn away — and still thy kindness
Pardons our blindness.

And still thy rain descends, thy sun is glowing,
Fruits ripen round, flowers are beneath us blowing,
And, as if man were some deserving creature,
Joys cover nature.

Oh how long-suffering, Lord! but thou delightest
To win with love the wandering; thou invitest
By smiles of mercy, not by frowns or terrors,
Man from his errors.

Who can resist thy gentle call, appealing
To every generous thought and grateful feeling?
That voice paternal whispering, watching ever,
My bosom? — never.

Father and Saviour! plant within that bosom
These seeds of holiness; and bid them blossom
In fragrance and in beauty bright and vernal,
And spring eternal.

Then place them in those everlasting gardens
Where angels walk, and seraphs are the wardens;
Where every flower that creeps through death's dark portal
Becomes immortal.

WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are!
Traveller, o'er yon mountain's height
See that glory-beaming star!
Watchman, doth its beauteous ray
Aught of hope or joy foretell?
Traveller, yes! it brings the day,
Promis'd day of Israel.

Watchman, tell us of the night:
Higher yet that star ascends!
Traveller, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth, its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveller, ages are its own,
And it bursts o'er all the earth!

Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveller, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wand'rings cease;
Hie thee to thy quiet home.
Traveller, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come.

Henry Francis Lyte

ABIDE WITH ME

Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away:
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou, who changest not, abide with me!

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,
But as thou dwell'st with thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free, —
Come, not to sojourn, but abide, with me!

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings;
But kind and good, with healing in thy wings:
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea;
Come, Friend of sinners, and thus bide with me!

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left thee:
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me!

I need thy presence every passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the Tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me!

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless:
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting, where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee:
In life and death, O Lord, abide with me!

"LO, WE HAVE LEFT ALL"

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave, and follow thee;
Destitute, despis'd, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my all shalt be.
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought and hop'd and known,
Yet how rich is my condition,
God and heaven are still my own!

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Saviour, too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me;
Thou art not, like man, untrue;
And, while thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate and friends may shun me:
Show thy face, and all is bright.

Go, then, earthly fame and treasure!
Come, disaster, scorn, and pain!
In thy service pain is pleasure;
With thy favor loss is gain.
I have call'd thee Abba, Father;
I have stay'd my heart on thee:
Storms may howl, and clouds may gather,
All must work for good to me.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'T will but drive me to thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.
Oh, 't is not in grief to harm me,
While thy love is left to me!
Oh, 't were not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmix'd with thee!

Take, my soul, thy full salvation,
Rise o'er sin and fear and care;
Joy to find in every station
Something still to do or bear.
Think what Spirit dwells within thee;
What a Father's smile is thine;
What a Saviour died to win thee:
Child of heaven, shouldst thou repine?

Haste then on from grace to glory,
Arm'd by faith, and wing'd by prayer;
Heaven's eternal day 's before thee,
God's own hand shall guide thee there.
Soon shall close thy earthly mission,
Swift shall pass thy pilgrim days,
Hope soon change to glad fruition,
Faith to sight, and prayer to praise!

THE SECRET PLACE

There is a safe and secret place
Beneath the wings divine,
Reserv'd for all the heirs of grace:
Oh, be that refuge mine!

The least and feeblest there may bide
Uninjur'd and unaw'd;
While thousands fall on every side,
He rests secure in God.

The angels watch him on his way,
And aid with friendly arm;
And Satan, roaring for his prey,
May hate, but cannot harm.

He feeds in pastures large and fair
Of love and truth divine;
O child of God, O glory's heir,
How rich a lot is thine!

A hand almighty to defend,
An ear for every call,
An honor'd life, a peaceful end,
And heaven to crown it all!

Samuel Wilberforce

JUST FOR TO-DAY

LORD, for to-morrow and its needs
I do not pray ;
Keep me from any stain of sin
Just for to-day :
Let me both diligently work
And duly pray ;
Let me be kind in word and deed
Just for to-day,
Let me be slow to do my will —
Prompt to obey :
Help me to sacrifice myself
Just for to-day.
Let me no wrong or idle word
Unthinking say —
Set thou thy seal upon my lips,
Just for to-day.
So for to-morrow and its needs
I do not pray,
But keep me, guide me, hold me, Lord,
Just for to-day.

Christopher Wordsworth

GIVING TO GOD

O LORD of heaven, and earth, and sea !
To thee all praise and glory be ;
How shall we show our love to thee,
Who givest all — who givest all ?

The golden sunshine, vernal air,
Sweet flowers and fruit thy love declare ;
When harvests ripen, thou art there,
Who givest all — who givest all.

For peaceful homes and healthful days,
For all the blessings earth displays,
We owe thee thankfulness and praise,
Who givest all — who givest all.

For souls redeem'd, for sins forgiven,
For means of grace and hopes of heaven,
What can to thee, O Lord ! be given,
Who givest all — who givest all ?

We lose what on ourselves we spend,
We have, as treasures without end,
Whatever, Lord, to thee we lend,
Who givest all — who givest all.

Whatever, Lord, we lend to thee,
Repaid a thousand-fold will be ;
Then gladly will we give to thee,
Who givest all — who givest all.

Horatius Bonar

LOST BUT FOUND

I WAS a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold ;
I did not love my Shepherd's voice,
I would not be controll'd.
I was a wayward child,
I did not love my home,
I did not love my Father's voice,
I lov'd afar to roam.

The Shepherd sought his sheep ;
The Father sought his child ;
They follow'd me o'er vale and hill,
O'er deserts waste and wild.

They found me nigh to death,
Famish'd, and faint, and lone ;
They bound me with the bands of love ;
They sav'd the wandering one.

They spoke in tender love,
They rais'd my drooping head ;
They gently clos'd my bleeding wounds,
My fainting soul they fed.
They wash'd my filth away,
They made me clean and fair ;
They brought me to my home in peace,
The long-sought wanderer.

Jesus my Shepherd is,
'T was he that lov'd my soul ;
'T was he that wash'd me in his blood,
'T was he that made me whole ;
'T was he that sought the lost,
That found the wandering sheep ;
'T was he that brought me to the fold,
'T is he that still doth keep.

I was a wandering sheep,
I would not be controll'd ;
But now I love my Shepherd's voice,
I love, I love the fold.
I was a wayward child,
I once preferr'd to roam ;
But now I love my Father's voice,
I love, I love his home.

THE VOICE FROM GALILEE

I HEARD the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto me and rest ;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon my breast.
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad,
I found in him a resting-place,
And he has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Behold, I freely give
The living water, — thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.
I came to Jesus and I drank
Of that life-giving stream ;
My thirst was quench'd, my soul reviv'd,
And now I live in him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
I am this dark world's light,
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise
And all thy day be bright.
I look'd to Jesus, and I found
In him my Star, my Sun ;
And in that light of life I' ll walk
Till travelling days are done.

THY WAY, NOT MINE

THY way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be !
Lead me by thine own hand,
Choose out the path for me.

Smooth let it be, or rough,
It will be still the best ;
Winding or straight, it matters not,
Right onward to thy rest.

I dare not choose my lot ;
I would not, if I might ;
Choose thou for me, my God ;
So shall I walk aright.

The kingdom that I seek
Is thine ; so let the way
That leads to it be thine,
Else I must surely stray.

Take thou my cup, and it
With joy or sorrow fill,
As best to thee may seem ;
Choose thou my good and ill ;

Choose thou for me my friends,
My sickness or my health ;
Choose thou my cares for me,
My poverty or wealth.

Not mine, not mine the choice,
In things or great or small ;
Be thou my guide, my strength,
My wisdom, and my all.

ABIDE WITH US

'T IS evening now !
O Saviour, wilt not thou
Enter my home and heart,
Nor ever hence depart,
Even when the morning breaks,
And earth again awakes ?
Thou wilt abide with me,
And I with thee.

The world is old !
Its air grows dull and cold ;
Upon its aged face
The wrinkles come apace ;
Its western sky is wan,
Its youth and joy are gone.
O Master, be our light,
When o'er us falls the night.

Evil is round !
Iniquities abound ;
Our cottage will be lone
When the great Sun is gone ;

O Saviour, come and bless,
Come share our loneliness ;
We need a comforter ;
Take up thy dwelling here.

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

In the still air the music lies unheard ;
In the rough marble beauty hides unseen ;
To wake the music and the beauty needs
The master's touch, the sculptor's chisel keen.

Great Master, touch us with thy skilful hand,
Let not the music that is in us die ;
Great Sculptor, hew and polish us ; nor let,
Hidden and lost, thy form within us lie.

Spare not the stroke ; do with us as thou wilt ;
Let there be nought unfinish'd, broken, marr'd ;
Complete thy purpose, that we may become
Thy perfect image, O our God and Lord.

A LITTLE WHILE

Beyond the smiling and the weeping
I shall be soon ;
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping,
I shall be soon.
Love, rest, and home !
Sweet hope !
Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the blooming and the fading
I shall be soon ;
Beyond the shining and the shading,
Beyond the hoping and the dreading,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the rising and the setting
I shall be soon ;
Beyond the calming and the fretting,
Beyond remembering and forgetting,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the gathering and the strowing
I shall be soon ;
Beyond the ebbing and the flowing,
Beyond the coming and the going,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the parting and the meeting
I shall be soon ;
Beyond the farewell and the greeting,
Beyond this pulse's fever beating,
I shall be soon.

Beyond the frost chain and the fever
I shall be soon ;
Beyond the rock waste and the river,
Beyond the ever and the never,
I shall be soon.
Love, rest, and home !
Sweet hope !
Lord, tarry not, but come.

John Samuel Bewley Monsell

LITANY

When my feet have wander'd
From the narrow way
Out into the desert,
Gone like sheep astray ;
Soil'd and sore with travel
Through the ways of men,
All too weak to bear me
Back to Thee again :
Hear me, O my Father !
From Thy mercy-seat,
Save me by the passion
Of the bleeding feet !

When my hands, unholy
Through some sinful deed
Wrought in me, have freshly
Made my Saviour's bleed :
And I cannot lift up
Mine to Thee in prayer,
Tied and bound, and holden
Back by my despair :
Then, my Father ! loose them,
Break for me their bands,
Save me by the passion
Of the bleeding hands !

When my thoughts, unruly,
  Dare to doubt of Thee,
And thy ways to question
  Deem is to be free :
Till, through cloud and darkness,
Wholly gone astray,
They find no returning
To the narrow way :
Then, my God ! mine only
Trust and truth art Thou ;
Save me by the passion
Of the bleeding brow !

When my heart, forgetful
  Of the love that yet,
Though by man forgotten,
  Never can forget ;
All its best affections
Spent on things below,
In its sad despondings
Knows not where to go :
Then, my God ! mine only
Hope and help Thou art ;
Save me by the passion
Of the bleeding heart !

Frederick William Faber

THE WILL OF GOD

I WORSHIP thee, sweet will of God !
  And all thy ways adore ;
And every day I live, I seem
  To love thee more and more.

Thou wert the end, the blessed rule
  Of our Saviour's toils and tears ;
Thou wert the passion of his heart
  Those three and thirty years.

And he hath breath'd into my soul
  A special love of thee,
A love to lose my will in his,
  And by that loss be free.

I love to see thee bring to nought
  The plans of wily men ;
When simple hearts outwit the wise,
  Oh, thou art loveliest then.

The headstrong world it presses hard
  Upon the church full oft,
And then how easily thou turn'st
  The hard ways into soft.

I love to kiss each print where thou
  Hast set thine unseen feet ;
I cannot fear thee, blessed will !
  Thine empire is so sweet.

When obstacles and trials seem
  Like prison walls to be,
I do the little I can do,
  And leave the rest to thee.

I know not what it is to doubt,
  My heart is ever gay ;
I run no risk, for, come what will,
  Thou always hast thy way.

I have no cares, O blessed will !
  For all my cares are thine :
I live in triumph, Lord ! for thou
  Hast made thy triumphs mine.

And when it seems no chance or change
  From grief can set me free,
Hope finds its strength in helplessness,
  And gayly waits on thee.

Man's weakness, waiting upon God,
  Its end can never miss,
For men on earth no work can do
  More angel-like than this.

Ride on, ride on, triumphantly,
  Thou glorious will, ride on !
Faith's pilgrim sons behind thee take
  The road that thou hast gone.

He always wins who sides with God,
  To him no chance is lost ;
God's will is sweetest to him, when
  It triumphs at his cost.

Ill that he blesses is our good,
  And unbless'd good is ill ;
And all is right that seems most wrong,
  If it be his sweet will.

PARADISE

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  Who doth not crave for rest,
Who would not seek the happy land
  Where they that lov'd are blest ?
    Where loyal hearts and true
      Stand ever in the light,
    All rapture through and through,
      In God's most holy sight.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  The world is growing old ;
Who would not be at rest and free
  Where love is never cold ?

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  Wherefore doth death delay ?
Bright death, that is the welcome dawn
  Of our eternal day.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  'T is weary waiting here ;
I long to be where Jesus is,
  To feel, to see him near.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  I want to sin no more,
I want to be as pure on earth
  As on thy spotless shore.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  I greatly long to see
The special place my dearest Lord
  Is destining for me.

O Paradise, O Paradise,
  I feel 't will not be long ;
Patience ! I almost think I hear
  Faint fragments of thy song ;
    Where loyal hearts and true
      Stand ever in the light,
    All rapture through and through,
      In God's most holy sight.

THE RIGHT MUST WIN

Oh, it is hard to work for God,
  To rise and take his part
Upon this battle-field of earth,
  And not sometimes lose heart !

He hides himself so wondrously,
  As though there were no God ;
He is least seen when all the powers
  Of ill are most abroad.

Or he deserts us at the hour
  The fight is all but lost ;
And seems to leave us to ourselves
  Just when we need him most.

Ill masters good ; good seems to change
  To ill with greatest ease ;
And, worst of all, the good with good
  Is at cross-purposes.

Ah ! God is other than we think ;
  His ways are far above,
Far beyond reason's height, and reach'd
  Only by childlike love.

Workman of God ! Oh, lose not heart,
  But learn what God is like ;
And in the darkest battle-field
  Thou shalt know where to strike.

Thrice bless'd is he to whom is given
  The instinct that can tell
That God is on the field when he
  Is most invisible.

Bless'd, too, is he who can divine
  Where real right doth lie,
And dares to take the side that seems
  Wrong to man's blindfold eye.

For right is right, since God is God ;
  And right the day must win ;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
  To falter would be sin.

Arthur Penrhyn Stanley

TEACH US TO DIE

WHERE shall we learn to die ?
Go, gaze with steadfast eye
On dark Gethsemane
Or darker Calvary,
Where through each lingering hour
The Lord of grace and power,
Most lowly and most high,
Has taught the Christian how to die.

When in the olive shade
His long last prayer he pray'd,
When on the cross to heaven
His parting spirit was given,
He show'd that to fulfil
The Father's gracious will,
Not asking how or why,
Alone prepares the soul to die.

No word of anxious strife,
No anxious cry for life ;
By scoff and torture torn,
He speaks not scorn for scorn ;
Calmly forgiving those
Who deem themselves his foes,
In silent majesty
He points the way at peace to die.

Delighting to the last
In memories of the past ;
Glad at the parting meal
In lowly tasks to kneel ;
Still yearning to the end
For mother and for friend ;
His great humility
Loves in such acts of love to die.

Beyond his depth of woes
A wider thought arose,
Along his path of gloom,
Thought for his country's doom ;
Athwart all pain and grief,
Thought for the contrite thief :
The far-stretch'd sympathy
Lives on when all beside shall die.

Bereft, but not alone,
The world is still his own ;
The realm of deathless truth
Still breathes immortal youth ;
Sure, though in shuddering dread,
That all is finished,
With purpose fix'd and high
The friend of all mankind must die.

Oh, by those weary hours
Of slowly-ebbing powers ;
By those deep lessons heard
In each expiring word ;
By that unfailing love
Lifting the soul above,
When our last end is nigh,
So teach us, Lord, with thee to die.

Christopher Newman Hall

MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND

MY times are in thy hand !
I know not what a day
Or e'en an hour may bring to me,
But I am safe while trusting thee,
Though all things fade away.
All weakness, I
On him rely
Who fix'd the earth and spread the starry sky.

My times are in thy hand !
Pale poverty or wealth,
Corroding care or calm repose,
Spring's balmy breath or winter's snows,
Sickness or buoyant health, —
Whate'er betide,
If God provide,
'T is for the best ; I wish no lot beside.

My times are in thy hand !
Should friendship pure illume

And strew my path with fairest flowers,
Or should I spend life's dreary hours
In solitude's dark gloom,
Thou art a friend,
Till time shall end
Unchangeably the same ; in thee all beauties blend.

My times are in thy hand !
Many or few, my days
I leave with thee, — this only pray,
That by thy grace, I, every day
Devoting to thy praise,
May ready be
To welcome thee
Whene'er thou com'st to set my spirit free.

My times are in thy hand !
Howe'er those times may end,
Sudden or slow my soul's release,
Midst anguish, frenzy, or in peace,
I 'm safe with Christ my friend.

If he is nigh,
Howe'er I die,
'T will be the dawn of heavenly ecstasy.

My times are in thy hand !
To thee I can intrust
My slumbering clay, till thy command
Bids all the dead before thee stand,
Awaking from the dust.
Beholding thee,
What bliss 't will be
With all thy saints to spend eternity !

To spend eternity
In heaven's unclouded light !
From sorrow, sin, and frailty free,
Beholding and resembling thee, —
O too transporting sight !
Prospect too fair
For flesh to bear !
Haste ! haste ! my Lord, and soon transport me there !

Anne Brontë

A PRAYER

My God (oh, let me call thee mine,
Weak, wretched sinner though I be),
My trembling soul would fain be thine ;
My feeble faith still clings to thee.

Not only for the past I grieve,
The future fills me with dismay ;
Unless Thou hasten to relieve,
Thy suppliant is a castaway.

I cannot say my faith is strong,
I dare not hope my love is great ;
But strength and love to thee belong ;
Oh, do not leave me desolate !

I know I owe my all to thee ;
Oh, take the heart I cannot give !
Do Thou my strength — my Saviour be,
And make me to thy glory live.

William John Blew

O LORD, THY WING OUTSPREAD

O Lord, thy wing outspread,
And us thy flock infold ;
Thy broad wing spread, that covered
Thy mercy-seat of old :
And o'er our nightly roof,
And round our daily path,
Keep watch and ward, and hold aloof
The devil and his wrath.

For thou dost fence our head,
And shield — yea, thou alone —
The peasant on his pallet-bed,
The prince upon his throne.
Make then our heart thine ark,
Whereon thy Mystic Dove
May brood, and lighten it, when dark,
With beams of peace and love ;

That dearer far to thee
  Than gold or cedar-shrine
The bodies of thy saints may be,
  The souls by thee made thine :

So nevermore be stirr'd
  That voice within our heart,
The fearful word that once was heard, —
  "Up, let us hence depart!"

Cecil Frances Alexander

THERE IS A GREEN HILL

THERE is a green hill far away,
  Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
  Who died to save us all.

We may not know, we cannot tell
  What pains he had to bear,
But we believe it was for us
  He hung and suffer'd there.

He died that we might be forgiven,
  He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
  Sav'd by his precious blood.

There was no other good enough
  To pay the price of sin ;
He only could unlock the gate
  Of heaven, and let us in.

O dearly, dearly has he lov'd,
  And we must love him too,
And trust in his redeeming blood,
  And try his works to do.

Elizabeth Cecilia Clephane

THE LOST SHEEP

("THE NINETY AND NINE")

THERE were ninety and nine that safely lay
  In the shelter of the fold ;
But one was out on the hills away,
  Far off from the gates of gold,
Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

"Lord, thou hast here thy ninety and nine :
  Are they not enough for thee?"
But the Shepherd made answer : "'T is of mine
  Has wander'd away from me ;
And although the road be rough and steep
I go to the desert to find my sheep."

But none of the ransom'd ever knew
  How deep were the waters cross'd,
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord pass'd through
  Ere he found his sheep that was lost.

Out in the desert he heard its cry —
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way,
  That mark out the mountain track?"
"They were shed for one who had gone astray
  Ere the Shepherd could bring him back."
"Lord, whence are thy hands so rent and torn?"
"They are pierced to-night by many a thorn."

But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,
  And up from the rocky steep,
There rose a cry to the gate of heaven,
  "Rejoice! I have found my sheep!"
And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own!"

Sabine Baring-Gould

CHILD'S EVENING HYMN

Now the day is over,
  Night is drawing nigh,
Shadows of the evening
  Steal across the sky.

Now the darkness gathers,
  Stars begin to peep,
Birds and beasts and flowers
  Soon will be asleep.

Jesu, give the weary
  Calm and sweet repose ;
With thy tenderest blessing
  May our eyelids close.

Grant to little children
  Visions bright of thee ;
Guard the sailors tossing
  On the deep blue sea.

Comfort every sufferer
  Watching late in pain ;
Those who plan some evil
  From their sin restrain.

Through the long night-watches
  May thine angels spread
Their white wings above me,
  Watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens,
  Then may I arise
Pure and fresh and sinless
  In thy holy eyes.

Glory to the Father,
  Glory to the Son,
And to thee, bless'd Spirit,
  Whilst all ages run. AMEN.

Frances Ridley Havergal

I GAVE MY LIFE FOR THEE

I GAVE my life for thee,
  My precious blood I shed
That thou mightst ransom'd be,
  And quicken'd from the dead.
I gave my life for thee ;
What hast thou given for me ?

I spent long years for thee
  In weariness and woe,
That an eternity
  Of joy thou mightest know.
I spent long years for thee ;
Hast thou spent one for me ?

My Father's home of light,
  My rainbow-circled throne,
I left, for earthly night,
  For wanderings sad and lone.
I left it all for thee ;
Hast thou left aught for me ?

I suffer'd much for thee,
  More than thy tongue may tell
Of bitterest agony,
  To rescue thee from hell.
I suffer'd much for thee ;
What canst thou bear for me ?

And I have brought to thee,
  Down from my home above,
Salvation full and free,
  My pardon and my love.
Great gifts I brought to thee ;
What hast thou brought to me ?

Oh, let thy life be given,
  Thy years for him be spent,
World-fetters all be riven,
  And joy with suffering blent ;
I gave myself for thee :
Give thou thyself to me ?

II

THE VICTORIAN EPOCH

(PERIOD OF TENNYSON, ARNOLD, BROWNING, ROSSETTI, AND SWINBURNE)

DEATH OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: April 23, 1850

ALFRED TENNYSON APPOINTED LAUREATE: November 21, 1850

PRELUDE

ENGLAND! since Shakespeare died no loftier day
  For thee than lights herewith a century's goal, —
  Nor statelier exit of heroic soul
Conjoined with soul heroic, — nor a lay
Excelling theirs who made renowned thy sway
  Even as they heard the billows which outroll
  Thine ancient sea, and left their joy and dole
In song, and on the strand their mantles gray.
Star-rayed with fame thine Abbey windows loom
  Above his dust whom the Venetian barge
  Bore to the main; who passed the two-fold marge
To slumber in thy keeping, — yet make room
  For the great Laurifer, whose chanting large
And sweet shall last until our tongue's far doom.

E. C. S.

THE VICTORIAN EPOCH

(PERIOD OF TENNYSON, ARNOLD, BROWNING, ROSSETTI, AND SWINBURNE)

COMPOSITE IDYLLIC SCHOOL

Frederick Tennyson

THIRTY-FIRST OF MAY

AWAKE! — the crimson dawn is glowing,
And blissful breath of Morn
From golden seas is earthward flowing
Thro' mountain-peaks forlorn;
'Twixt the tall roses, and the jasmines near,
That darkly hover in the twilight air,
I see the glory streaming, and I hear
The sweet wind whispering like a messenger.

'T is time to sing! — the Spirits of Spring
Go softly by mine ear,
And out of Fairyland they bring
Glad tidings to me here;
'T is time to sing! now is the pride of Youth
Pluming the woods, and the first rose appears,
And Summer from the chambers of the South
Is coming up to wipe away all tears.

They bring glad tidings from afar
Of Her that cometh after
To fill the earth, to light the air,
With music and with laughter;
Ev'n now she leaneth forward, as she stands,
And her fire-wing'd horses, shod with gold,
Stream, like a sunrise, from before her hands,
And thro' the Eastern gates her wheels are roll'd.

'T is time to sing — the woodlands ring
New carols day by day;
The wild birds of the islands sing
Whence they have flown away;
'T is time to sing: the nightingale is come,
And 'mid the laurels chants he all night long,
And bids the leaves be still, the winds be dumb,
And like the starlight flashes forth his song.

Immortal Beauty from above,
Like sunlight breath'd on cloud,
Touches the weary soul with love,
And hath unwound the shroud
Of buried Nature till she looks again
Fresh in infantine smiles and childish tears,
And o'er the rugged hearts of aged men
Sheds the pure dew of Youth's delicious years.

The heart of the awaken'd Earth
Breathes odorous ecstasy;
Let ours beat time unto her mirth,
And hymn her jubilee!
The glory of the Universal Soul
Ascends from mountain-tops, and lowly flowers,
The mighty pulses throbbing through the Whole
Call unto us for answering life in ours.

Arise! young Queen of forests green,
  A path was strewn for thee
With hyacinth, and gold bells atween,
  And red anemone;
Arise! young Queen of beauty and delight,
  Lift up in this fair land thine happy eyes;
The valleys yearn, and gardens for thy sight,
  But chief this heart that prays for thee with sighs.

How oft into the opening blue
  I look'd up wistfully,
In hope to see thee wafted thro'
  Bright rifts of stormy sky;
Many gray morns, sad nights, and weary days,
  Without thy golden smile my heart was dying;
Oh! in the valleys let me see thy face,
  And thy loose locks adown the wood-walks flying.

Come, with thy flowers, and silver showers,
  Thy rainbows, and thy light;
Fold in thy robe the naked Hours,
  And fill them with thy might;
Though less I seek thee for the loveliness
  Thou laughest from thee over land and sea,
Than for the hues wherein gay Fancies dress
  My drooping spirit at the sight of thee.

Come, with thy voice of thousand joys,
  Thy leaves, and fluttering wings;
Come with thy breezes, and the noise
  Of rivulets and of springs;
Though less I seek thee for thine harmonies
  Of winds and waters, and thy songs divine,
Than for that Angel that within me lies,
  And makes glad music echoing unto thine.

O Gardens blossoming anew!
  O Rivers, and fresh Rills!
O Mountains in your mantles blue!
  O dales of daffodils!
What ye can do no mortal spirit can,
  Ye have a strength within we cannot borrow,
Blessed are ye beyond the heart of Man,
  Your Joy, your Love, your Life beyond all Sorrow!

THE BLACKBIRD

How sweet the harmonies of afternoon!
  The Blackbird sings along the sunny breeze
His ancient song of leaves, and summer boon;
  Rich breath of hayfields streams thro' whispering trees;
And birds of morning trim their bustling wings,
And listen fondly — while the Blackbird sings.

How soft the lovelight of the West reposes
  On this green valley's cheery solitude,
On the trim cottage with its screen of roses,
  On the gray belfry with its ivy hood,
And murmuring mill-race, and the wheel that flings
Its bubbling freshness — while the Blackbird sings.

The very dial on the village church
  Seems as 't were dreaming in a dozy rest;
The scribbled benches underneath the porch
  Bask in the kindly welcome of the West;
But the broad casements of the old Three Kings
Blaze like a furnace — while the Blackbird sings.

And there beneath the immemorial elm
  Three rosy revellers round a table sit,
And thro' gray clouds give laws unto the realm,
  Curse good and great, but worship their own wit,
And roar of fights, and fairs, and junketings,
Corn, colts, and curs — the while the Blackbird sings.

Before her home, in her accustom'd seat,
  The tidy Grandam spins beneath the shade
Of the old honeysuckle, at her feet
  The dreaming pug, and purring tabby laid;
To her low chair a little maiden clings,
And spells in silence — while the Blackbird sings.

Sometimes the shadow of a lazy cloud
Breathes o'er the hamlet with its gardens green,
While the far fields with sunlight overflow'd
Like golden shores of Fairyland are seen;
Again, the sunshine on the shadow springs,
And fires the thicket where the Blackbird sings.

The woods, the lawn, the peaked Manor-house,
With its peach-cover'd walls, and rookery loud,
The trim, quaint garden alleys, screen'd with boughs,
The lion-headed gates, so grim and proud,
The mossy fountain with its murmurings,
Lie in warm sunshine — while the Blackbird sings.

The ring of silver voices, and the sheen
Of festal garments — and my Lady streams
With her gay court across the garden green;
Some laugh, and dance, some whisper their love-dreams;
And one calls for a little page; he strings
Her lute beside her — while the Blackbird sings.

A little while — and lo! the charm is heard,
A youth, whose life has been all Summer, steals
Forth from the noisy guests around the board,
Creeps by her softly; at her footstool kneels;
And, when she pauses, murmurs tender things
Into her fond ear — while the Blackbird sings.

The smoke-wreaths from the chimneys curl up higher,
And dizzy things of eve begin to float
Upon the light; the breeze begins to tire;
Half way to sunset with a drowsy note
The ancient clock from out the valley swings;
The Grandam nods — and still the Blackbird sings.

Far shouts and laughter from the farmstead peal,
Where the great stack is piling in the sun;
Thro' narrow gates o'erladen wagons reel,
And barking curs into the tumult run;
While the inconstant wind bears off, and brings
The merry tempest — and the Blackbird sings.

On the high wold the last look of the sun
Burns, like a beacon, over dale and stream;
The shouts have ceased, the laughter and the fun;
The Grandam sleeps, and peaceful be her dream;
Only a hammer on an anvil rings;
The day is dying — still the Blackbird sings.

Now the good Vicar passes from his gate
Serene, with long white hair; and in his eye
Burns the clear spirit that hath conquer'd Fate,
And felt the wings of immortality;
His heart is throng'd with great imaginings,
And tender mercies — while the Blackbird sings.

Down by the brook he bends his steps, and thro'
A lowly wicket; and at last he stands
Awful beside the bed of one who grew
From boyhood with him — who with lifted hands
And eyes, seems listening to far welcomings,
And sweeter music than the Blackbird sings.

Two golden stars, like tokens from the Blest,
Strike on his dim orbs from the setting sun;
His sinking hands seem pointing to the West;
He smiles as though he said — "Thy will be done:"
His eyes, they see not those illuminings;
His ears, they hear not what the Blackbird sings.

FROM "NIOBE"

I too remember, in the after years,
The long-hair'd Niobe, when she was old,
Sitting alone, without the city gates,
Upon the ground; alone she sat, and mourn'd.
Her watchers, mindful of her royal state,

Her widowhood, and sorrows, follow'd her
Far off, when she went forth, to be alone
In lonely places ; and at set of sun
They won her back by some fond phantasy,
By telling her some tale of the gone days
Of her dear lost ones, promising to show her
Some faded garland, or some broken toy,
Dusty and dim, which they had found, or feign'd
To have found, some plaything of their infant hours.
Within the echoes of a ruin'd court
She sat and mourn'd, with her lamenting voice,
Melodious in sorrow, like the sound
Of funeral hymns ; for in her youth she sang
Along the myrtle valleys in the spring,
Plucking the fresh pinks and the hyacinths,
With her fair troop of girls, who answer'd her
Silverly sweet, so that the lovely tribe
Were Nature's matchless treble to the last
Delicious pipe, pure, warbling, dewy clear.
In summer and in winter, that lorn voice
Went up, like the struck spirit of this world,
Making the starry roof of heaven tremble
With her lament, and agony, and all
The crowned Gods in their high tabernacles
Sigh unawares, and think upon their deeds.
Her guardians let her wander at her will,
For all could weep for her ; had she not been
The first and fairest of that sunny land,
And bless'd with all things ; doubly crown'd with power
And beauty, doubly now discrown'd and fallen ?
Oh ! none would harm her, only she herself ;
And chiefly then when they would hold her back,
And sue her to take comfort in her home,
Or in the bridal chambers of her youth,
Or in the old gardens, once her joy and pride,
Or the rose-bowers along the river-shore
She lov'd of old, now silent and forsaken.
For then she fled away, as though in fear,
As if she saw the spectres of her hours
Of joyaunce pass before her in the shapes
Of her belov'd ones. But most she chose
Waste places, where the moss and lichen crawl'd,
And the wild ivy flutter'd, and the rains
Wept thro' the roofless ruins, and all seem'd
To mourn in symbols, and to answer to her,
Showing her outward that she was within.
The unregarding multitude pass'd on,
Because her woe was a familiar sight.
But some there were that shut their ears and fled,
And they were childless ; the rose-lipp'd and young
Felt that imperial voice and desolate
Strike cold into their hearts ; children at play
Were smit with sudden silence, with their toys
Clutch'd in their hands, forgetful of the game.
Aged she was, yet beautiful in age.
Her beauty, thro' the cloud of years and grief,
Shone as a wintry sun ; she never smil'd,
Save when a darkness pass'd across the sun,
And blotted out from her entranced eyes
Disastrous shapes that rode upon his disk,
Tyrannous visions, armed presences ;
And then she sigh'd and lifted up her head,
And shed a few warm tears. But when he rose,
And her sad eyes unclos'd before his beams,
She started up with terrors in her look,
That wither'd up all pity in affright,
And ran about, like one with Furies torn,
And rent her hair, and madly threaten'd Heaven,
And call'd for retribution on the Gods,
Crying, "O save me from Him, He is there ;
Oh, let me wear my little span of life.
I see Him in the centre of the sun ;
His face is black with wrath ! thou angry God,
I am a worthless thing, a childless mother,
Widow'd and wasted, old and comfortless,
But still I am alive ; wouldst thou take all ?
Thou who hast snatch'd my hopes and my delights,
Thou who hast kill'd my children, wouldst thou take
The little remnant of my days of sorrow,
Which the sharp winds of the first winter days,
Or the first night of frost, may give unto thee ?
For never shall I seek again that home
Where they are not ; cold, cold shall be the hearth

Where they were gather'd, cold as is my heart!
Oh! if my living lot be bitterness,
'T is sweeter than to think, that, if I go
Down to the dust, then I shall think no more
Of them I lov'd and lost, the thoughts of whom
Are all my being, and shall speak no more,
In answer to their voices in my heart,
As though it were mine ear, rewording all
Their innocent delights, and fleeting pains,
Their infant fondnesses, their little wants,
And simple words. Oh! while I am, I dream
Of those who are not; thus my anguish grows
My solace, as the salt surf of the seas
Clothes the sharp crags with beauty." Then her mood
Would veer to madness, like a windy change
That brings up thunder, and she rais'd her voice,
Crying, "And yet they are not, they who were,
And never more shall be! accursed dreams!"
And, suddenly becoming motionless,
The bright hue from her cheeks and forehead pass'd,
And, full of awful resignation, fixing
Her large undazzled orbs upon the sun,
She shriek'd, "Strike, God, thou canst not harm me more!"

Charles Tennyson Turner

THE LION'S SKELETON

How long, O lion, hast thou fleshless lain?
What rapt thy fierce and thirsty eyes away?
First came the vulture: worms, heat, wind, and rain
Ensued, and ardors of the tropic day.
I know not — if they spar'd it thee — how long
The canker sate within thy monstrous mane,
Till it fell piecemeal, and bestrew'd the plain,
Or, shredded by the storming sands, was flung
Again to earth; but now thine ample front,
Whereon the great frowns gather'd, is laid bare;
The thunders of thy throat, which erst were wont
To scare the desert, are no longer there;
Thy claws remain, but worms, wind, rain, and heat
Have sifted out the substance of thy feet.

THE VACANT CAGE

Our little bird in his full day of health
With his gold-coated beauty made us glad,
And when disease approach'd with cruel stealth,
A sadder interest our smiles forbad.
How oft we watch'd him, when the night hours came,
His poor head buried near his bursting heart,
Which beat within a puff'd and troubled frame;
But he has gone at last, and play'd his part:
The seed-glass, slighted by his sickening taste,
The little moulted feathers, saffron-tipp'd,
The fountain, where his fever'd bill was dipp'd,
The perches, which his failing feet embraced,
All these remain — not even his bath remov'd —
But where 's the spray and flutter that we lov'd?

THE LACHRYMATORY

From out the grave of one whose budding years
Were cropp'd by death, when Rome was in her prime,
I brought the phial of his kinsman's tears,
There placed, as was the wont of ancient time;
Round me, that night, in meads of asphodel,
The souls of the early dead did come and go,
Drawn by that flask of grief, as by a spell,
That long-imprison'd shower of human woe.

As round Ulysses, for the draught of blood,
The heroes throng'd, those spirits flock'd to me,
Where, lonely, with that charm of tears, I stood;
Two, most of all, my dreaming eyes did see;
The young Marcellus, young, but great and good,
And Tully's daughter, mourn'd so tenderly.

THE BUOY-BELL

How like the leper, with his own sad cry
Enforcing his own solitude, it tolls!
That lonely bell set in the rushing shoals,
To warn us from the place of jeopardy?
O friend of man! sore-vex'd by ocean's power,
The changing tides wash o'er thee day by day;
Thy trembling mouth is fill'd with bitter spray,
Yet still thou ringest on from hour to hour;
High is thy mission, though thy lot is wild —
To be in danger's realm a guardian sound;
In seamen's dreams a pleasant part to bear,
And earn their blessing as the year goes round,
And strike the key-note of each grateful prayer,
Breath'd in their distant homes by wife or child!

THE FOREST GLADE

As one dark morn I trod a forest glade,
A sunbeam enter'd at the further end,
And ran to meet me thro' the yielding shade —
As one, who in the distance sees a friend,
And, smiling, hurries to him; but mine eyes,
Bewilder'd by the change from dark to bright,
Receiv'd the greeting with a quick surprise
At first, and then with tears of pure delight;
For sad my thoughts had been — the tempest's wrath
Had gloom'd the night, and made the morrow gray;
That heavenly guidance humble sorrow hath,
Had turn'd my feet into that forest-way,
Just when His morning light came down the path,
Among the lonely woods at early day.

THE LATTICE AT SUNRISE

As on my bed at dawn I mus'd and pray'd,
I saw my lattice prank'd upon the wall,
The flaunting leaves and flitting birds withal —
A sunny phantom interlaced with shade;
"Thanks be to heaven," in happy mood I said,
"What sweeter aid my matins could befall
Than the fair glory from the East hath made?
What holy sleights hath God, the Lord of all,
To bid us feel and see! we are not free
To say we see not, for the glory comes
Nightly and daily, like the flowing sea;
His lustre pierceth through the midnight glooms
And, at prime hour, behold! He follows me
With golden shadows to my secret rooms."

THE ROOKERY

METHOUGHT, as I beheld the rookery pass
Homeward at dusk upon the rising wind,
How every heart in that close-flying mass
Was well befriended by the Almighty mind:
He marks each sable wing that soars or drops,
He sees them forth at morning to their fare,
He sets them floating on His evening air,
He sends them home to rest on the tree-tops:
And when through umber'd leaves the night-winds pour,
With lusty impulse rocking all the grove,
The stress is measur'd by an eye of love,
No root is burst, though all the branches roar;
And, in the morning, cheerly as before,
The dark clan talks, the social instincts move.

ORION

How oft I 've watch'd thee from the garden croft,
In silence, when the busy day was done,
Shining with wondrous brilliancy aloft,
And flickering like a casement 'gainst the sun!
I 've seen thee soar from out some snowy cloud,
Which held the frozen breath of land and sea,
Yet broke and sever'd as the wind grew loud —
But earth-bound winds could not dismember thee,
Nor shake thy frame of jewels; I have guess'd
At thy strange shape and function, haply felt
The charm of that old myth about thy belt
And sword; but, most, my spirit was possess'd
By His great Presence, Who is never far
From his light-bearers, whether man or star.

TO THE GOSSAMER-LIGHT

Quick gleam, that ridest on the gossamer!
How oft I see thee, with thy wavering lance,
Tilt at the midges in their evening dance,
A gentle joust set on by summer air!
How oft I watch thee from my garden-chair!
And, failing that, I search the lawns and bowers,
To find thee floating o'er the fruits and flowers,
And doing thy sweet work in silence there.
Thou art the poet's darling, ever sought
In the fair garden or the breezy mead;
The wind dismounts thee not; thy buoyant thread
Is as the sonnet, poising one bright thought,
That moves but does not vanish: borne along
Like light, — a golden drift through all the song!

LETTY'S GLOBE

When Letty had scarce pass'd her third glad year,
And her young, artless words began to flow,
One day we gave the child a color'd sphere
Of the wide earth, that she might mark and know,
By tint and outline, all its sea and land.
She patted all the world; old empires peep'd
Between her baby fingers; her soft hand
Was welcome at all frontiers. How she leap'd,
And laugh'd and prattled in her world-wide bliss;
But when we turn'd her sweet unlearned eye
On our own isle, she rais'd a joyous cry,
"Oh! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there!"
And, while she hid all England with a kiss,
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair!

HER FIRST-BORN

It was her first sweet child, her heart's delight:
And, though we all foresaw his early doom,
We kept the fearful secret out of sight;
We saw the canker, but she kiss'd the bloom.
And yet it might not be: we could not brook
To vex her happy heart with vague alarms,
To blanch with fear her fond intrepid look,
Or send a thrill through those encircling arms.
She smil'd upon him, waking or at rest:
She could not dream her little child would die:
She toss'd him fondly with an upward eye:
She seem'd as buoyant as a summer spray,
That dances with a blossom on its breast,
Nor knows how soon it will be borne away.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

THE DESERTED HOUSE

LIFE and Thought have gone away
Side by side,
Leaving door and windows wide :
Careless tenants they !

All within is dark as night :
In the windows is no light ;
And no murmur at the door,
So frequent on its hinge before.

Close the door, the shutters close,
Or thro' the windows we shall see
The nakedness and vacancy
Of the dark deserted house.

Come away : no more of mirth
Is here or merry-making sound.
The house was builded of the earth,
And shall fall again to ground.

Come away : for Life and Thought
Here no longer dwell ;
But in a city glorious —
A great and distant city — have bought
A mansion incorruptible.
Would they could have stay'd with us !

THE LOTOS-EATERS

"COURAGE !" he said, and pointed toward the land,
"This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
In the afternoon they came unto a land
In which it seemed always afternoon.
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon ;
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land : far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West : thro' mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
A land where all things always seem'd the same !
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave ; but evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more ;"
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave ; we will no longer roam."

CHORIC SONG

I

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls

Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies.
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leav'd flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consum'd with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness ?
All things have rest : why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
Nor never fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm !"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things ?

III

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is wooed from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labor be ?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence ; ripen, fall, and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height ;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change :
For surely now our household hearths are cold :
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle ?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile :
'T is hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,

Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labor unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII

But propp'd on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropp'd eyelid still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill —
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twin'd vine —
To watch the emerald-color'd water falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak:
The Lotos blows by every winding creek:
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone:
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclin'd
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world:
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-us'd race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil;
Till they perish and they suffer — some, 't is whisper'd — down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That lov'd me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vex'd the dim sea. I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known: cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honor'd of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'

Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life pil'd on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is sav'd
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.
This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle —
Well-lov'd of me, discerning to fulfil
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.
There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with me —
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and oppos'd
Free hearts, free foreheads — you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil;
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Mov'd earth and heaven, that which we are, we are:
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favors fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!
  Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
  On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!
  My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
  And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
  Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
  The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
  And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
  And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height;
  No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
  Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight — to me is given
  Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
  That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
  Pure spaces cloth'd in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
  Whose odors haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
  This mortal armor that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
  Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
  And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
  Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
  Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
  Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
  By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
  Until I find the holy Grail.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE

Like souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.
  In crystal vapor everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
  From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet pip'd his song:
Sometimes the throstle whistled strong
Sometimes the sparhawk, wheel'd along,
Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong:
  By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
  Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere
Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.
  She seem'd a part of joyous Spring;
A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
Buckled with golden clasps before;
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
  Clos'd in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
Now by some tinkling rivulet,
In mosses mix'd with violet
Her cream-white mule his pastern set:
  And fleeter now she skimm'd the plains
Than she whose elfin prancer springs
By night to eery warblings,
When all the glimmering moorland rings
  With jingling bridle-reins.

As fast she fled thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid:
She look'd so lovely, as she sway'd
  The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
  Upon her perfect lips.

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
  On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
  The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
  That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
  That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
  To their haven under the hill;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
  And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
  At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
  Will never come back to me.

SONGS FROM "THE PRINCESS"

AS THRO' THE LAND

As thro' the land at eve we went,
  And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
Oh, we fell out I know not why,
  And kiss'd again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
  That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
  And kiss again with tears!
For when we came where lies the child
  We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
Oh, there above the little grave,
  We kiss'd again with tears.

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
  Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
  Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
  Blow him again to me;
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
  Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest;
Silver sails all out of the west
  Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

BUGLE SONG

The splendor falls on castle walls
  And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
  And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
  And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
  The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
  They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
  And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying.
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge;
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd
On lips that are for others; deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret;
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

THY VOICE IS HEARD

THY voice is heard thro' rolling drums
  That beat to battle where he stands ;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
  And gives the battle to his hands :
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
  He sees his brood about thy knee ;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
  And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

ASK ME NO MORE

ASK me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;
  The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape
  With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape ;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?
  Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : what answer should I give ?
  I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
  Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
  Ask me no more.

Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :
  I strove against the stream and all in vain :
  Let the great river take me to the main :
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
  Ask me no more.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

I

BURY the Great Duke
  With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke
  To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore ?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow ;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute :
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew !
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the Giver,
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,
And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd :

And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd ;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem
roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss ;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead captain
taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI

Who is he that cometh, like an honor'd
guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier
and with priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my
rest ?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous
man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea ;
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee ;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun ;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labor'd rampart lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,
Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamor of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing
wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings ;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler
down ;
A day of onsets of despair !
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves
away ;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and over-
threw.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo !
Mighty Seaman, tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

VII

A people's voice! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confus'd by brainless mobs and lawless Powers;
Thank Him who isl'd us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.
Remember him who led your hosts;
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent; even if they broke
In thunder, silent; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power;
Who let the turbid streams of rumor flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life;
Who never spoke against a foe;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right:
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred nam'd;
Truth-lover was our English Duke;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be sham'd.

VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honor shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scal'd
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he: his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Colossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure:
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory:
And let the land whose hearths he sav'd from shame
For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illumin'd cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honor, honor, honor, honor to him,
Eternal honor to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue

Far on in summers that we shall not see :
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain !
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this, our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere ;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane :
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will ;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears :
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears :
The black earth yawns : the mortal disappears ;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;
He is gone who seem'd so great.—
Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in State,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him.
Speak no more of his renown,
Lay your earthly fancies down,
And in the vast cathedral leave him,
God accept him, Christ receive him.

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !" he said :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade !"
Was there a man dismay'd ?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blunder'd :
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die :
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,

All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they made !
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

NORTHERN FARMER

OLD STYLE

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere aloän ?
Noorse ? thourt nowt o' a noorse : whoy, Doctor's abeän an' agoän :
Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle : but I beänt a fool :
Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gawin' to breäk my rule.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what 's nawways true :
Naw soort o' koind o' use to saäy the things that a do.
I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere.
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for foorty year.

Parson 's a beän loikewoise, an' a sittin' 'ere o' my bed.
"The amoighty 's a taäkin o' you[1] to 'issén, my friend," a said,
An' a towd ma my sins, an 's toithe were due, an' I gied it in hond :
I done my duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.

Larn'd a ma' beä. I reckons I 'annot sa mooch to larn.
But a cast oop, thot a did, 'bout Bessy Marris's barne.
Thaw a knaws I hallus voäted wi' Squoire an' choorch an' staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's chooch afoor moy Sally wur deäd,
An' 'eärd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-clock[2] ower my 'eäd,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said an' I coom'd away.

Bessy Marris's barne ! tha knaws she laäid it to meä.
Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, sheä.
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun understond ;
I done moy duty boy 'um as I 'a done boy the lond.

But Parson a cooms an' a goäs, an' a says it eäsy an' freeä,
"The almoighty 's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my friend," says 'eä.
I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun said it in 'aäste :
But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a stubb'd Thurnaby waäste.

D' ya moind the waäste, my lass ? naw, naw, tha was not born then ;
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eärd 'um mysen ;
Moäst loike a butter-bump,[3] fur I 'eärd 'um about an' about,
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäv'd an' rembled 'um out.

Keäper's it wur ; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is faäce
Down i' the woild enemies[4] afoor I coom'd to the plaäce.
Noäks or Thimbleby — toäner[5] 'ed shot 'um as deäd as a naäil.
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize — but git ma my aäle.

Dubbut looök at the waäste : theer warn't not feeäd for a cow ;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' looök at it now —
Warnt worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots o' feeäd,
Fourscoor[1] yows upon it an' some on it down i' seeäd.[6]

Nobbut a bit on it 's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it an' all,

[1] ou as in hour. [2] Cockchafer. [3] Bittern. [4] Anemones. [5] One or other. [6] Clover.

If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let
ma aloän,
Meä, wi' haäte hoonderd haäcre o' Squoire's,
an' lond o' my oän.

Do godamoighty knaw what a 's doin'
a-taäkin' o' meä ?
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yon-
der a peä ;
An' Squoire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a' dear
a' dear !
And I 'a managed for Squoire coom Michael-
mas thutty year.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant not a
'aäpoth o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins — a niver
mended a fence :
But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an'
taäke ma now
Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby
hoälms to plow !

Looök 'ow quoloty smoiles when they seeäs
ma a passin' boy,
Says to thessén, naw doubt, " what a man a
beä sewer-loy ! "
Fur they knaws what I beän to Squoire sin
fust a coom'd to the 'All ;
I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done moy
duty boy hall.

Squoire 's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons
'ull 'a to wroite,
For whoä 's to howd the lond ater meä thot
muddles ma quoit ;
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver give
it to Joänes,
Naw, nor a moänt to Robins — a niver rem-
bles the stoäns.

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap
wi' 'is kittle o' steäm
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi'
the Divil's oän teäm.
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they
says is sweet,
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I
couldn abeär to see it.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring
ma the aäle ?
Doctor 's a' toättler, lass, an a 's hallus i' the
owd taäle ;
I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws
naw moor nor a floy ;
Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doy
I mun doy.

THE DAISY

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine ;
In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbia show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road ;
How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heav'd with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim ;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleas'd us most,
Not the clipp'd palm of which they boast ;
But distant color, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green ;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread ;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We lov'd that hall tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
  A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries, were ours ;
  What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
  Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we cross'd the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain ;
  Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;
  Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
  The height, the space, the gloom, the glory !
A mount of marble, a hundred spires !

I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.
  I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair,
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there
  A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como ; shower and storm and blast
  Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded ; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
  The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
  To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
  The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
  But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
  O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold :
  Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,

I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nursling of another sky
  Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth,
  The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
  Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.

THE FLOWER

Once in a golden hour
  I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
  The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
  Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
  Curs'd me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
  It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
  Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
  By every town and tower,

Till all the people cried,
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable :
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed ;
And now again the people
Call it but a weed.

COME INTO THE GARDEN, MAUD

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone ;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon ;
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune ;
Till silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone ?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day ;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine ?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the hall :
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all ;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree ;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel doz'd on the lea ;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me ;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one ;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
She is coming, my life, my fate ;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near ;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late ;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear ;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead ;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

THE SHELL

FROM "MAUD"

SEE what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairily well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

What is it ? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill ?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world ?

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three-decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand !

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

FROM "IDYLLS OF THE KING"

THEN saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stol'd, black-hooded, like a dream — by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold : and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge."
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loos'd the shatter'd casque, and chaf'd his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Strip'd with dark blood : for all his face was white
And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls —
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the daïs-throne — were parch'd with dust ;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere :
"Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dissolv'd
Which was an image of the mighty world,

And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge :
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?
I have liv'd my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure ! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst — if indeed I go
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt) —
To the island-valley of Avilion ;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Mov'd from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

RIZPAH

Wailing, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea —
And Willy's voice in the wind, "O mother, come out to me."
Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I cannot go ?
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

We should be seen, my dear ; they would spy us out of the town.
The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself drench'd with the rain.

Anything fallen again ? nay — what was there left to fall ?
I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones, I have hidden them all.
What am I saying ? and what are *you ?* do you come as a spy ?
Falls ? what falls ? who knows ? As the tree falls so must it lie.

Who let her in ? how long has she been ? you — what have you heard ?
Why did you sit so quiet ? you never have spoken a word.
O — to pray with me — yes — a lady — none of their spies —
But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

Ah — you, that have liv'd so soft, what should *you* know of the night,
The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright ?
I have done it, while you were asleep — you were only made for the day.
I have gather'd my baby together — and now you may go your way.

Nay — for it 's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.
But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.

I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he
went out to die.
"They dar'd me to do it," he said, and he
never has told me a lie.
I whipp'd him for robbing an orchard once
when he was but a child —
"The farmer dar'd me to do it," he said;
he was always so wild —
And idle — and could n't be idle — my
Willy — he never could rest.
The King should have made him a soldier; he would have been one of his
best.

But he liv'd with a lot of wild mates, and
they never would let him be good;
They swore that he dare not rob the mail,
and he swore that he would;
And he took no life, but he took one purse,
and when all was done
He flung it among his fellows — I 'll none
of it, said my son.

I came into court to the Judge and the
lawyers. I told them my tale,
God's own truth — but they kill'd him,
they kill'd him for robbing the mail.
They hang'd him in chains for a show —
he had always borne a good name —
To be hang'd for a thief — and then put
away — is n't that enough shame?
Dust to dust — low down — let us hide!
but they set him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare
at him, passing by.
God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and
horrible fowls of the air,
But not the black heart of the lawyer who
kill'd him and hang'd him there.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid
him my last goodbye;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell,
"O mother!" I heard him cry.
I could n't get back tho' I tried, he had
something further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The
jailer forced me away.

Then since I could n't but hear that cry of
my boy that was dead,
They seiz'd me and shut me up: they
fasten'd me down on my bed.
"Mother, O mother!" — he call'd in the
dark to me year after year —
They beat me for that, they beat me —
you know that I could n't but hear;
And then at the last they found I had
grown so stupid and still
They let me abroad again — but the
creatures had work'd their will.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my
bone was left —
I stole them all from the lawyers — and
you, will you call it a theft? —
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me,
the bones that had laugh'd and
had cried —
Theirs? O no! they are mine — not
theirs — they had mov'd in my side.

Do you think I was scar'd by the bones?
I kiss'd 'em, I buried 'em all —
I can't dig deep, I am old — in the night
by the churchyard wall.
My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the
trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,
But I charge you never to say that I laid
him in holy ground.

They would scratch him up — they would
hang him again on the cursed tree.
Sin? O yes — we are sinners, I know —
let all that be,
And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's
good will toward men—
"Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord"
— let me hear it again;
"Full of compassion and mercy — long-
suffering." Yes, O yes!
For the lawyer is born but to murder — the
Saviour lives but to bless.
He 'll never put on the black cap except for
the worst of the worst,
And the first may be last — I have heard it
in church — and the last may be first.
Suffering — O long-suffering — yes, as the
Lord must know,
Year after year in the mist and the wind
and the shower and the snow.

Heard, have you? what? they have told
you he never repented his sin.
How do they know it? are *they* his mother?
are *you* of his kin?
Heard! have you ever heard, when the
storm on the downs began,
The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the
sea that 'ill moan like a man?

Election, Election and Reprobation — it 's
all very well.
But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall
not find him in Hell.
For I car'd so much for my boy that the
Lord has look'd into my care,
And He means me, I 'm sure, to be happy
with Willy, I know not where.

And if *he* be lost — but to save *my* soul,
that is all your desire :
Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my
boy be gone to the fire ?
I have been with God in the dark — go, go,
you may leave me alone —
You never have borne a child — you are
just as hard as a stone.

Madam, I beg your pardon ! I think that
you mean to be kind,
But I cannot hear what you say for my
Willy's voice in the wind —
The snow and the sky so bright — he us'd
but to call in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church
and not from the gibbet — for hark !
Nay — you can hear it yourself — it is
coming — shaking the walls —
Willy — the moon 's in a cloud — Good-
night. I am going. He calls.

FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL

Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower — but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

SONG IN "THE FORESTERS"*

There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no hearts like English hearts,
Such hearts of oak as they be.
There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no men like Englishmen,
So tall and bold as they be.

And these will strike for England
And man and maid be free
To foil and spoil the tyrant
Beneath the greenwood tree.

There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no wives like English wives,
So fair and chaste as they be.
There is no land like England
Where'er the light of day be ;
There are no maids like the English maids,
So beautiful as they be.

And these shall wed with freemen,
And all their sons be free,
To sing the songs of England
Beneath the greenwood tree.

VASTNESS

Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs
after many a vanish'd face,
Many a planet by many a sun may roll with
a dust of a vanish'd race.

Raving politics, never at rest — as this poor
earth's pale history runs, —
What is it all but a trouble of ants in the
gleam of a million million of suns ?

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side,
truthless violence mourn'd by the
Wise,
Thousands of voices drowning his own in a
popular torrent of lies upon lies ;

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious
annals of army and fleet,
Death for the right cause, death for the
wrong cause, trumpets of victory,
groans of defeat ;

Innocence seeth'd in her mother's milk,
and Charity setting the martyr
aflame ;
Thraldom who walks with the banner of
Freedom, and recks not to ruin a
realm in her name ;

Faith at her zenith, or all but lost in the
gloom of doubts that darken the
schools ;
Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her hand,
follow'd up by her vassal legion of
fools ;

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Trade flying over a thousand seas with her spice and her vintage, her silk and her corn ;
Desolate offing, sailorless harbors, famishing populace, wharves forlorn ;

Star of the morning, Hope in the sunrise ; gloom of the evening, Life at a close ;
Pleasure who flaunts on her wide downway with her flying robe and her poison'd rose ;

Pain, that has crawl'd from the corpse of Pleasure, a worm which writhes all day, and at night
Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper, and stings him back to the curse of the light ;

Wealth with his wines and his wedded harlots ; honest Poverty, bare to the bone ;
Opulent Avarice, lean as Poverty ; Flattery gilding the rift in a throne ;

Fame blowing out from her golden trumpet a jubilant challenge to Time and to Fate ;
Slander, her shadow, sowing the nettle on all the laurell'd graves of the Great ;

Love for the maiden, crown'd with marriage, no regrets for aught that has been,
Household happiness, gracious children, debtless competence, golden mean ;

National hatreds of whole generations, and pigmy spites of the village spire ;
Vows that will last to the last death-ruckle, and vows that are snapp'd in a moment of fire ;

He that has liv'd for the lust of a minute, and died in the doing it, flesh without mind ;
He that has nail'd all flesh to the Cross, till Self died out in the love of his kind ;

Spring and Summer and Autumn and Winter, and all these old revolutions of earth ;
All new-old revolutions of Empire — change of the tide — what is all of it worth ?

What the philosophies, all the sciences, poesy, varying voices of prayer ?
All that is noblest, all that is basest, all that is filthy with all that is fair ?

What is it all, if we all of us end but in being our own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence, drown'd in the deeps of a meaningless Past ?

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger of bees in their hive ? —
. . . . . .
Peace, let it be ! for I loved him, and love him for ever : the dead are not dead but alive.

THE SILENT VOICES *

When the dumb Hour, cloth'd in black,
Brings the Dreams about my bed,
Call me not so often back,
Silent Voices of the dead,
Toward the lowland ways behind me,
And the sunlight that is gone !
Call me rather, silent Voices,
Forward to the starry track
Glimmering up the heights beyond me
On, and always on !

CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me !
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark ;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have cross'd the bar.

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Earl of Beaconsfield

(BENJAMIN D'ISRAELI)

WELLINGTON

NOT only that thy puissant arm could bind
The tyrant of a world; and, conquering Fate,
Enfranchise Europe, do I deem thee great;
But that in all thy actions I do find
Exact propriety: no gusts of mind
Fitful and wild, but that continuous state
Of order'd impulse mariners await
In some benignant and enriching wind, —
The breath ordain'd of Nature. Thy calm mien
Recalls old Rome, as much as thy high deed;
Duty thine only idol, and serene
When all are troubled; in the utmost need
Prescient; thy country's servant ever seen,
Yet sovereign of thyself, whate'er may speed.

Thomas Westwood

O WIND OF THE MOUNTAIN!

O WIND of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear!
I have a prayer to whisper in thine ear:—
Hush, pine-tree, hush! Be silent, sycamore!
Cease thy wild waving, ash-tree, old and hoar!
Flow softly, stream! My voice is faint with fear —
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear!

In the dull city, by the lowland shore,
Pale grows the cheek, so rosy-fresh of yore.
Woe for the child — the fair blithe-hearted child —
Once thy glad playmate on the breezy wild!
Hush, pine-tree, hush! — my voice is faint with fear —
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear!

Pale grows the cheek, and dim the sunny eyes,
And the voice falters, and the laughter dies.
Woe for the child! She pines, on that sad shore,
For the free hills and happy skies of yore.
Hush, river, hush! — my voice is faint with fear —
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear!

O Wind of the Mountain, thou art swift and strong —
Follow, for love's sake, though the way be long.
Follow, oh! follow, over down and dale,
To the far city in the lowland vale.
Hush, pine-tree, hush! — my voice is faint with fear —
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear!

Kiss the dear lips, and bid the laughters rise;
Flush the wan cheek, and brighten the dim eyes;
Sing songs of home, and soon, from grief and pain,
Win back thy playmate, blessed Wind, again!
Win back my darling — while away my fear —
O Wind of the Mountain, Wind of the Mountain, hear!

IN THE GOLDEN MORNING OF THE WORLD

IN the golden morning of the world,
When creation's freshness was unfurl'd,
Had earth truer, fonder hearts than now?
One, at least, in this our day, I know,
(Whisper soft, *ah! benedicite!*)
Faithful-fond as any heart could be
In the golden morning of the world.

And were faces, in that orient time,
Flush'd, in sooth, with more resplendent prime,
More consummate loveliness than now?
Nay, one maiden face, at least, I know
(Whisper soft, *ah! benedicite!*)
Just as fair as any face could be
In the golden morning of the world.

But dark shadows reign, and storms are rife,
In the once serene clear heaven of life.
Oh! sweet angel, at the shining gate,
By God's mercy, keep one earthly fate,
One dear life — *ah! benedicite!*
Happy, calm, as any such could be
In the golden morning of the world!

Arthur Hugh Clough

IN A LECTURE-ROOM

AWAY, haunt thou not me,
Thou vain Philosophy!
Little hast thou bestead,
Save to perplex the head,
And leave the spirit dead.
Unto thy broken cisterns wherefore go,
While from the secret treasure-depths below,
Fed by the skyey shower,
And clouds that sink and rest on hill-tops high,
Wisdom at once, and Power,
Are welling, bubbling forth, unseen, incessantly?
Why labor at the dull mechanic oar,
When the fresh breeze is blowing,
And the strong current flowing,
Right onward to the Eternal Shore?

A PROTEST

LIGHT words they were, and lightly, falsely said;
She heard them, and she started, — and she rose,
As in the act to speak; the sudden thought
And unconsider'd impulse led her on.
In act to speak she rose, but with the sense
Of all the eyes of that mix'd company
Now suddenly turn'd upon her, some with age
Harden'd and dull'd, some cold and critical;
Some in whom vapors of their own conceit,
As moist malarious mists the heavenly stars,
Still blotted out their good, the best at best
By frivolous laugh and prate conventional
All too untun'd for all she thought to say, —
With such a thought the mantling blood to her cheek
Flush'd up, and o'er-flush'd itself, blank night her soul
Made dark, and in her all her purpose swoon'd.
She stood as if for sinking. Yet anon,
With recollections clear, august, sublime,
Of God's great truth, and right immutable,
Which, as obedient vassals, to her mind
Came summon'd of her will, in self-negation
Quelling her troublous earthly consciousness,
She queen'd it o'er her weakness. At the spell
Back roll'd the ruddy tide, and leaves her cheek
Paler than erst, and yet not ebbs so far
But that one pulse of one indignant thought
Might hurry it hither in flood. So as she stood
She spoke. God in her spoke, and made her heard.

QUA CURSUM VENTUS

As ships, becalm'd at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied,
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so — but why the tale reveal
Of those whom, year by year unchanged,
Brief absence join'd anew to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged?

At dead of night their sails were fill'd,
And onward each rejoicing steer'd:
Ah, neither blame, for neither will'd,
Or wist, what first with dawn appear'd!

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too,
Through winds and tides one compass guides, —
To that, and your own selves, be true.

But O blithe breeze, and O great seas,
Though ne'er, that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last!

One port, methought, alike they sought,
One purpose hold where'er they fare, —
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas,
At last, at last, unite them there!

FROM "THE BOTHIE OF TOBER-NA-VUOLICH"

THE BATHERS

There is a stream, I name not its name, lest inquisitive tourist
Hunt it, and make it a lion, and get it at last into guide-books,
Springing far off from a loch unexplor'd in the folds of great mountains,
Falling two miles through rowan and stunted alder, enveloped
Then for four more in a forest of pine, where broad and ample
Spreads, to convey it, the glen with heathery slopes on both sides:
Broad and fair the stream, with occasional falls and narrows;
But, where the glen of its course approaches the vale of the river,
Met and block'd by a huge interposing mass of granite,
Scarce by a channel deep-cut, raging up, and raging onward,
Forces its flood through a passage so narrow a lady would step it.
There, across the great rocky wharves, a wooden bridge goes,
Carrying a path to the forest; below, three hundred yards, say,
Lower in level some twenty-five feet, through flats of shingle,
Stepping-stones and a cart-track cross in the open valley.
But in the interval here the boiling, pent-up water
Frees itself by a final descent, attaining a basin,
Ten feet wide and eighteen long, with whiteness and fury
Occupied partly, but mostly pellucid, pure, a mirror;
Beautiful there for the color deriv'd from green rocks under;
Beautiful, most of all, where beads of foam up-rising
Mingle their clouds of white with the delicate hue of the stillness.
Cliff over cliff for its sides, with rowan and pendant birch boughs,
Here it lies, unthought of above at the bridge and pathway,
Still more enclosed from below by wood and rocky projection.
You are shut in, left alone with yourself and perfection of water,
Hid on all sides, left alone with yourself and the goddess of bathing.
Here, the pride of the plunger, you stride the fall and clear it;
Here, the delight of the bather, you roll in beaded sparklings,
Here into pure green depth drop down from lofty ledges.
Hither, a month agone, they had come, and discover'd it; hither
(Long a design, but long unaccountably left unaccomplish'd),
Leaving the well-known bridge and pathway above to the forest,
Turning below from the track of the carts over stone and shingle,
Piercing a wood, and skirting a narrow and natural causeway
Under the rocky wall that hedges the bed of the streamlet,
Rounded a craggy point, and saw on a sudden before them
Slabs of rock, and a tiny beach, and perfection of water,

Picture-like beauty, seclusion sublime, and the goddess of bathing.
There they bath'd, of course, and Arthur, the glory of headers,
Leap'd from the ledges with Hope, he twenty feet, he thirty ;
There, overbold, great Hobbes from a ten-foot height descended,
Prone, as a quadruped, prone with hands and feet protending ;
There in the sparkling champagne, ecstatic, they shriek'd and shouted.
"Hobbes's gutter" the Piper entitles the spot, profanely,
Hope "the Glory" would have, after Arthur, the glory of headers :
But, for before they departed, in shy and fugitive reflex
Here in the eddies and there did the splendor of Jupiter glimmer ;
Adam adjudged it the name of Hesperus, star of the evening.
Hither, to Hesperus, now, the star of the evening above them,
Come in their lonelier walk the pupils twain and Tutor ;
Turn'd from the track of the carts, and passing the stone and shingle,
Piercing the wood, and skirting the stream by the natural causeway,
Rounded the craggy point, and now at their ease look'd up ; and
Lo, on the rocky ledge, regardant, the Glory of headers,
Lo, on the beach, expecting the plunge, not cigarless, the Piper. —
And they look'd, and wonder'd, incredulous, looking yet once more.
Yes, it was he, on the ledge, bare-limb'd, an Apollo, down-gazing,
Eying one moment the beauty, the life, ere he flung himself in it,
Eying through eddying green waters the green-tinting floor underneath them,
Eying the bead on the surface, the bead, like a cloud, rising to it,
Drinking in, deep in his soul, the beautiful hue and the clearness,
Arthur, the shapely, the brave, the unboasting, the glory of headers ;
Yes, and with fragrant weed, by his knapsack, spectator and critic,
Seated on slab by the margin, the Piper, the Cloud-compeller.

PESCHIERA

What voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost ?
" 'T is better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all."

The tricolor — a trampled rag —
Lies dirt and dust ; the lines I track
By sentries' boxes, yellow, black,
Lead up to no Italian flag.

I see the Croat soldier stand
Upon the grass of your redoubts ;
The eagle with his black wing flouts
The breadth and beauty of your land.

Yet not in vain, although in vain,
O men of Brescia ! on the day
Of loss past hope, I heard you say
Your welcome to the noble pain.

You said : " Since so it is, good-bye,
Sweet life, high hope ; but whatsoe'er
May be, or must, no tongue shall dare
To tell, ' The Lombard fear'd to die ! ' "

You said (there shall be answer fit) :
" And if our children must obey,
They must ; but, thinking on this day,
'T will less debase them to submit."

You said (O not in vain you said) :
" Haste, brothers, haste, while yet we may ;
The hours ebb fast of this one day,
While blood may yet be nobly shed."

Ah ! not for idle hatred, not
For honor, fame, nor self-applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did what will not be forgot.

And though the stranger stand, 't is true,
By force and fortune's right he stands :
By fortune, which is in God's hands,
And strength, which yet shall spring in you.

This voice did on my spirit fall,
Peschiera, when thy bridge I crost :
" 'T is better to have fought and lost,
Than never to have fought at all."

FROM "AMOURS DE VOYAGE"

JUXTAPOSITION

JUXTAPOSITION, in fine ; and what is juxtaposition ?
Look you, we travel along in the railway-carriage or steamer,
And, *pour passer le temps*, till the tedious journey be ended,
Lay aside paper or book, to talk with the girl that is next one ;
And, *pour passer le temps*, with the terminus all but in prospect,
Talk of eternal ties and marriages made in heaven.
Ah, did we really accept with a perfect heart the illusion !
Ah, did we really believe that the Present indeed is the Only !
Or through all transmutation, all shock and convulsion of passion,
Feel we could carry undimmed, unextinguished, the light of our knowledge !
But for his funeral train which the bridegroom sees in the distance,
Would he so joyfully, think you, fall in with the marriage-procession ?
But for that final discharge, would he dare to enlist in that service ?
But for that certain release, ever sign to that perilous contract ?
But for that exit secure, ever bend to that treacherous doorway ? —
Ah, but the bride, meantime, — do you think she sees it as he does ?
But for the steady fore-sense of a freer and larger existence,
Think you that man could consent to be circumscribed here into action ?
But for assurance within of a limitless ocean divine, o'er
Whose great tranquil depths unconscious the wind-toss'd surface
Breaks into ripples of trouble that come and change and endure not, —
But that in this, of a truth, we have our being, and know it,
Think you we men could submit to live and move as we do here ?
Ah, but the women, — God bless them ! — they don't think at all about it.
Yet we must eat and drink, as you say. And as limited beings
Scarcely can hope to attain upon earth to an Actual Abstract,
Leaving to God contemplation, to His hands knowledge confiding,
Sure that in us if it perish, in Him it abideth and dies not,
Let us in His sight accomplish our petty particular doings, —
Yes, and contented sit down to the victual that He has provided.
Allah is great, no doubt, and Juxtaposition his prophet.
Ah, but the women, alas ! they don't look at it in that way.
Juxtaposition is great ; — but, my friend, I fear me, the maiden
Hardly would thank or acknowledge the lover that sought to obtain her,
Not as the thing he would wish, but the thing he must even put up with, —
Hardly would tender her hand to the wooer that candidly told her
That she is but for a space, an *ad-interim* solace and pleasure, —
That in the end she shall yield to a perfect and absolute something,
Which I then for myself shall behold, and not another, —
Which, amid fondest endearments, meantime I forget not, forsake not.
Ah, ye feminine souls, so loving and so exacting,
Since we cannot escape, must we even submit to deceive you ?
Since, so cruel is truth, sincerity shocks and revolts you,
Will you have us your slaves to lie to you, flatter and — leave you ?

ITE DOMUM SATURÆ, VENIT HESPERUS

THE skies have sunk, and hid the upper snow,
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)
The rainy clouds are filling fast below,
And wet will be the path, and wet shall we.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !

Ah dear ! and where is he, a year agone,
Who stepp'd beside and cheer'd us on and on ?

My sweetheart wanders far away from me
In foreign land or on a foreign sea.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !

The lightning zigzags shoot across the sky,
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)
And through the vale the rains go sweeping by ;
Ah me ! and when in shelter shall we be ?
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)

Cold, dreary cold, the stormy winds feel they
O'er foreign lands and foreign seas that stray.
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)
And doth he e'er, I wonder, bring to mind
The pleasant huts and herds he left behind ?

And doth he sometimes in his slumbering see
The feeding kine, and doth he think of me,
My sweetheart wandering wheresoe'er it be ?
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !

The thunder bellows far from snow to snow,
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)
And loud and louder roars the flood below.
Heigh-ho ! but soon in shelter shall we be :
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !

Or shall he find before his term be sped
Some comelier maid that he shall wish to wed ?
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)
For weary is work, and weary day by day
To have your comfort miles on miles away.
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)

Or may it be that I shall find my mate,
And he, returning, see himself too late ?
For work we must, and what we see, we see,
And God he knows, and what must be, must be,
When sweethearts wander far away from me.
Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !

The sky behind is brightening up anew,
(Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie !)
The rain is ending, and our journey too;
Heigh-ho ! aha ! for here at home are we : —
In, Rose, and in, Provence and La Palie !

AH ! YET CONSIDER IT AGAIN

Old things need not be therefore true,
O brother men, nor yet the new ;
Ah ! still awhile the old thought retain,
And yet consider it again !

The souls of now two thousand years
Have laid up here their toils and fears,
And all the earnings of their pain, —
Ah, yet consider it again !

We ! what do we see ? each a space
Of some few yards before his face ;
Does that the whole wide plan explain ?
Ah, yet consider it again !

Alas ! the great world goes its way,
And takes its truth from each new day ;
They do not quit, nor can retain,
Far less consider it again.

WHERE LIES THE LAND

Where lies the land to which the ship would go ?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from ? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

On sunny noons upon the deck's smooth face,
Link'd arm in arm, how pleasant here to pace !
Or o'er the stern reclining, watch below
The foaming wake far widening as we go

On stormy nights, when wild northwesters rave,
How proud a thing to fight with wind and wave!
The dripping sailor on the reeling mast
Exults to bear, and scorns to wish it past.

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

John Campbell Shairp

CAILLEACH BEIN-Y-VREICH[1]

WEIRD wife of Bein-y-Vreich! horo! horo!
Aloft in the mist she dwells;
Vreich horo! Vreich horo! Vreich horo!
All alone by the lofty wells.

Weird, weird wife! with the long gray locks,
She follows her fleet-foot stags,
Noisily moving through splinter'd rocks,
And crashing the grisly crags.

Tall wife, with the long gray hose! in haste
The rough stony beach she walks;
But dulse or seaweed she will not taste,
Nor yet the green kail stalks.

And I will not let my herds of deer,
My bonny red deer go down;
I will not let them down to the shore,
To feed on the sea-shells brown.

Oh, better they love in the corrie's recess,
Or on mountain top to dwell,
And feed by my side on the green, green cress,
That grows by the lofty well.

Broad Bein-y-Vreich is grisly and drear,
But wherever my feet have been
The well-springs start for my darling deer,
And the grass grows tender and green.

And there high up on the calm nights clear,
Beside the lofty spring,
They come to my call, and I milk them there,
And a weird wild song I sing.

But when hunter men round my dun deer prowl,
I will not let them nigh;
Through the rended cloud I cast one scowl,
They faint on the heath and die.

And when the north wind o'er the desert bare
Drives loud, to the corries below
I drive my herds down, and bield them there
From the drifts of the blinding snow.

Then I mount the blast, and we ride full fast,
And laugh as we stride the storm,
I, and the witch of the Cruachan Ben,
And the scowling-eyed Seul-Gorm.

Menella Bute Smedley

THE LITTLE FAIR SOUL

A LITTLE fair soul that knew no sin
Look'd over the edge of Paradise,
And saw one striving to come in,
With fear and tumult in his eyes.

"Oh, brother, is it you?" he cried;
"Your face is like a breath from home;
Why do you stay so long outside?
I am athirst for you to come!

[1] A beanshith or fairy seen by hunters.

"Tell me first how our mother fares,
And has she wept too much for me?"
"White are her cheeks and white her hairs,
But not from gentle tears for thee."

"Tell me, where are our sisters gone?"
"Alas, I left them weary and wan."
"And tell me is the baby grown?"
"Alas! he is almost a man.

"Cannot you break the gathering days,
And let the light of death come through,
Ere his feet stumble in the maze
Cross'd safely by so few, so few?

"For like a crowd upon the sea
That darkens till you find no shore,
So was that face of life to me,
Until I sank for evermore;

"And like an army in the snow
My days went by, a treacherous train,
Each smiling as he struck his blow,
Until I lay among them slain."

"Oh, brother, there was a path so clear!"
"There might be, but I never sought."
"Oh, brother, there was a sword so near!"
"There might be, but I never fought."

"Yet sweep this needless gloom aside,
For you are come to the gate at last!"
Then in despair that soul replied,
"The gate is fast, the gate is fast!"

"I cannot move this mighty weight,
I cannot find this golden key;
But hosts of heaven around us wait,
And none has ever said 'No' to me.

"Sweet Saint, put by thy palm and scroll,
And come and undo the door for me!"
"Rest thee still, thou little fair soul,
It is not mine to keep the key."

"Kind Angel, strike these doors apart!
The air without is dark and cold."
"Rest thee still, thou little pure heart,
Not for my word will they unfold."

Up all the shining heights he pray'd
For that poor Shadow in the cold!
Still came the word, "Not ours to aid;
We cannot make the doors unfold."

But that poor Shadow, still outside,
Wrung all the sacred air with pain;
And all the souls went up and cried
Where never cry was heard in vain.

No eye beheld the pitying Face,
The answer none might understand,
But dimly through the silent space
Was seen the stretching of a Hand.

Robert Leighton

THE DRIED-UP FOUNTAIN

Outside the village, by the public road,
I know a dried-up fountain, overgrown
With herbs, the haunt of legendary toad,
And grass, by Nature sown.

I know not where its trickling life was still'd;
No living ears its babbling tongue has caught;
But often, as I pass, I see it fill'd
And running o'er with thought.

I see it as it was in days of old,
The blue-ey'd maiden stooping o'er its brim,
And smoothing in its glass her locks of gold,
Lest she should meet with *him*.

She knows that he is near, yet I can see
Her sweet confusion when she hears him come.
No tryst had they, though every evening he
Carries her pitchers home.

The ancient beggar limps along the road
At thirsty noon, and rests him by its brink;
The dusty pedlar lays aside his load,
And pauses there to drink.

And there the village children come to play,
When busy parents work in shop and field.
The swallows, too, find there the loamy clay
When 'neath the eaves they build.

When cows at eve come crooning home, the boy
Leaves them to drink, while his mechanic skill
Within the brook sets up, with inward joy,
His tiny water-mill.

And when the night is hush'd in summer sleep,
And rest has come to laborer and team,
I hear the runnel through the long grass creep,
As 't were a whispering dream.

Alas! 't is all a dream. Lover and lass,
Children and wanderers, are in their graves;
And where the fountain flow'd a greener grass —
Its *In Memoriam* — waves.

Matthew Arnold

WRITTEN IN EMERSON'S ESSAYS

"O MONSTROUS, dead, unprofitable world,
That thou canst hear, and hearing, hold thy way!
A voice oracular hath peal'd to-day,
To-day a hero's banner is unfurl'd;
Hast thou no lip for welcome?" — So I said.
Man after man, the world smil'd and pass'd by;
A smile of wistful incredulity
As though one spake of life unto the dead —
Scornful, and strange, and sorrowful, and full
Of bitter knowledge. Yet the will is free;
Strong is the soul, and wise, and beautiful;
The seeds of god-like power are in us still;
Gods are we, bards, saints, heroes, if we will! —
Dumb judges, answer, truth or mockery?

THE WORLD AND THE QUIETIST

"WHY, when the world's great mind
Hath finally inclin'd,
Why," you say, Critias, "be debating still?
Why, with these mournful rhymes
Learn'd in more languid climes,
Blame our activity
Who, with such passionate will,
Are what we mean to be?"

Critias, long since, I know
(For Fate decreed it so),
Long since the world hath set its heart to live;
Long since, with credulous zeal
It turns life's mighty wheel,
Still doth for laborers send
Who still their labor give,
And still expects an end.

Yet, as the wheel flies round,
With no ungrateful sound
Do adverse voices fall on the world's ear.
Deafen'd by his own stir
The rugged laborer
Caught not till then a sense
So glowing and so near
Of his omnipotence.

So, when the feast grew loud
In Susa's palace proud,
A white-rob'd slave stole to the Great King's side.
He spake — the Great King heard;
Felt the slow-rolling word
Swell his attentive soul;
Breath'd deeply as it died,
And drain'd his mighty bowl.

FROM "SOHRAB AND RUSTUM"

THE COMBAT

HE ceas'd, but while he spake, Rustum had risen,
And stood erect, trembling with rage; his club
He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear,
Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right-hand

Blaz'd bright and baleful, like that autumn-star,
The baleful sign of fevers ; dust had soil'd
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.
His breast heav'd, his lips foam'd, and twice his voice
Was chok'd with rage ; at last these words broke way : —
"Girl ! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands !
Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words !
Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no more !
Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art wont to dance ;
But on the Oxus-sands, and in the dance
Of battle, and with me, who make no play
Of war ; I fight it out, and hand to hand.
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge, and wine !
Remember all thy valor ; try thy feints
And cunning ! all the pity I had is gone ;
Because thou hast sham'd me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl's wiles."
He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And he too drew his sword ; at once they rush'd
Together, as two eagles on one prey
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west ; their shields
Dash'd with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters
Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing trees — such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.
And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural conflict ; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and dark'd the sun
Over the fighters' heads ; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapp'd the pair.
In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and they alone ;
For both the on-looking hosts on either hand
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with bloodshot eyes
And laboring breath ; first Rustum struck the shield
Which Sohrab held stiff out ; the steel-spik'd spear
Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach the skin,
And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm,
Nor clove its steel quite through ; but all the crest
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume,
Never till now defil'd, sank to the dust ;
And Rustum bow'd his head ; but then the gloom
Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the air,
And lightnings rent the cloud ; and Ruksh, the horse,
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful cry ; —
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pain'd desert-lion, who all day
Has trail'd the hunter's javelin in his side,
And comes at night to die upon the sand —
The two hosts heard that cry, and quak'd for fear,
And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.
But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but rush'd on,
And struck again ; and again Rustum bow'd
His head ; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum rais'd his head ; his dreadful eyes
Glar'd, and he shook on high his menacing spear,
And shouted : *Rustum !* — Sohrab heard that shout,
And shrank amaz'd : back he recoil'd one step,
And scann'd with blinking eyes the advancing form ;

And then he stood bewilder'd, and he dropp'd
His covering shield, and the spear pierced his side.
He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to the ground ;
And then the gloom dispers'd, and the wind fell,
And the bright sun broke forth, and melted all
The cloud ; and the two armies saw the pair ; —
Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.

OXUS

But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there mov'd,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasmian waste,
Under the solitary moon ; — he flow'd
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming, and bright, and large ; then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents ; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles —
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,
A foil'd circuitous wanderer — till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bath'd stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.

FROM "BALDER DEAD"

THE INCREMATION

But now the sun had pass'd the height of Heaven,
And soon had all that day been spent in wail ;
But then the Father of the ages said : —
"Ye Gods, there well may be too much of wail !
Bring now the gather'd wood to Balder's ship ;
Heap on the deck the logs, and build the pyre."
But when the Gods and Heroes heard, they brought
The wood to Balder's ship, and built a pile,
Full the deck's breadth, and lofty; then the corpse
Of Balder on the highest top they laid,
With Nanna on his right, and on his left
Hoder, his brother, whom his own hand slew.
And they set jars of wine and oil to lean
Against the bodies, and stuck torches near,
Splinters of pine-wood, soak'd with turpentine ;
And brought his arms and gold, and all his stuff,
And slew the dogs who at his table fed,
And his horse, Balder's horse, whom most he lov'd,
And threw them on the pyre, and Odin threw
A last choice gift thereon, his golden ring.
The mast they fix'd, and hoisted up the sails,
Then they put fire to the wood ; and Thor
Set his stout shoulder hard against the stern
To push the ship through the thick sand ; — sparks flew
From the deep trench she plough'd, so strong a God
Furrow'd it ; and the water gurgled in.
And the ship floated on the waves, and rock'd.
But in the hills a strong east-wind arose,
And came down moaning to the sea ; first squalls
Ran black o'er the sea's face, then steady rush'd
The breeze, and fill'd the sails, and blew the fire ;
And wreath'd in smoke the ship stood out to sea.
Soon with a roaring rose the mighty fire,
And the pile crackled ; and between the logs
Sharp quivering tongues of flame shot out, and leap'd,
Curling and darting, higher, until they lick'd
The summit of the pile, the dead, the mast,
And ate the shrivelling sails ; but still the ship

Drove on, ablaze above her hull with fire.
And the Gods stood upon the beach, and gaz'd.
And while they gaz'd, the sun went lurid down
Into the smoke-wrapp'd seas, and night came on.
Then the wind fell, with night, and there was calm;
But through the dark they watch'd the burning ship
Still carried o'er the distant waters on,
Farther and farther, like an eye of fire.
And long, in the far dark, blaz'd Balder's pile;
But fainter, as the stars rose high, it flar'd;
The bodies were consum'd, ash chok'd the pile.
And as, in a decaying winter-fire,
A charr'd log, falling, makes a shower of sparks —
So with a shower of sparks the pile fell in,
Reddening the sea around; and all was dark.
But the Gods went by starlight up the shore
To Asgard, and sate down in Odin's hall
At table, and the funeral-feast began.
All night they ate the boar Serimner's flesh,
And from their horns, with silver rimm'd, drank mead,
Silent, and waited for the sacred morn.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Come, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go —
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain —
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!
"Mother dear, we cannot stay!
The wild white horses foam and fret."
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down;
Call no more!
One last look at the white-wall'd town,
And the little gray church on the windy shore;
Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day;
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of a far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea;
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little gray church on the shore to-day.
'T will be Easter-time in the world — ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;

Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smil'd, she went up through the surf in the bay.

Children dear, was it yesterday?
Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf in the bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town;
Through the narrow pav'd streets, where all was still,
To the little gray church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,
And we gaz'd up the aisle through the small leaded panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest: shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy!
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea;
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children;
Come, children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a lov'd one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

PHILOMELA

Hark! ah, the nightingale—
The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!

What triumph ! hark ! — what pain !
O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world pain —
Say, will it never heal ?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy rack'd heart and brain
Afford no balm ?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild ?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame ?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale ?
Listen, Eugenia —
How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves !
Again — thou hearest ?
Eternal passion !
Eternal pain !

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits ; — on the French coast the light
Gleams and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air !
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanch'd sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery ; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl'd.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-winds, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another ! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain ;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confus'd alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

FROM "EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA"

And you, ye stars,
Who slowly begin to marshal,
As of old, in the fields of heaven,
Your distant, melancholy lines !
Have you, too, surviv'd yourselves ?
Are you, too, what I fear to become ?
You, too, once liv'd ;
You too mov'd joyfully,
Among august companions,
In an older world, peopled by Gods,
In a mightier order,
The radiant, rejoicing, intelligent Sons of Heaven.
But now, ye kindle
Your lonely, cold-shining lights,
Unwilling lingerers
In the heavenly wilderness,

For a younger, ignoble world ;
And renew, by necessity,
Night after night your courses,
In echoing, unnear'd silence,
Above a race you know not —
Uncaring and undelighted,
Without friend and without home ;
Weary like us, though not
Weary with our weariness.

No, no, ye stars ! there is no death with you,
No languor, no decay ! languor and death,
They are with me, not you ! ye are alive —
Ye, and the pure dark ether where ye ride
Brilliant above me ! And thou, fiery world,
That sapp'st the vitals of this terrible mount
Upon whose charr'd and quaking crust I stand —
Thou, too, brimmest with life ! — the sea of cloud,
That heaves its white and billowy vapors up
To moat this isle of ashes from the world,
Lives ; and that other fainter sea, far down,
O'er whose lit floor a road of moonbeams leads
To Etna's Liparëan sister-fires
And the long dusky line of Italy —
That mild and luminous floor of waters lives,
With held-in joy swelling its heart ; I only,
Whose spring of hope is dried, whose spirit has fail'd,
I, who have not, like these, in solitude
Maintain'd courage and force, and in myself
Nurs'd an immortal vigor — I alone
Am dead to life and joy, therefore I read
In all things my own deadness.

THE BURIED LIFE

Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet,
Behold, with tears mine eyes are wet !
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
We know, we know that we can smile !
But there 's a something in this breast,
To which thy light words bring no rest,
And thy gay smiles no anodyne ;
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,
And turn those limpid eyes on mine,
And let me read there, love ! thy inmost soul.

Alas ! is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak ?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel ?
I knew the mass of men conceal'd
Their thoughts, for fear that if reveal'd
They would by other men be met
With blank indifference, or with blame reprov'd ;
I knew they liv'd and mov'd
Trick'd in disguises, alien to the rest
Of men, and alien to themselves — and yet
The same heart beats in every human breast !

But we, my love ! — doth a like spell benumb
Our hearts, our voices ? — must we too be dumb ?

Ah ! well for us, if even we,
Even for a moment, can get free
Our heart, and have our lips unchain'd ;
For that which seals them hath been deep-ordain'd !

Fate, which foresaw
How frivolous a baby man would be —
By what distractions he would be possess'd,
How he would pour himself in every strife,
And well-nigh change his own identity —
That it might keep from his capricious play
His genuine self, and force him to obey
Even in his own despite his being's law,
Bade through the deep recesses of our breast
The unregarded river of our life
Pursue with indiscernible flow its way ;
And that we should not see
The buried stream, and seem to be
Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded streets,
But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life ;
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
In tracking out our true, original course ;
A longing to inquire
Into the mystery of this heart which beats
So wild, so deep in us — to know
Whence our lives come and where they go.

And many a man in his own breast then delves,
But deep enough, alas ! none ever mines.
And we have been on many thousand lines,
And we have shown, on each, spirit and power ;
But hardly have we, for one little hour,
Been on our own line, have we been ourselves —
Hardly had skill to utter one of all
The nameless feelings that course through our breast,
But they course on for ever unexpress'd.
And long we try in vain to speak and act
Our hidden self, and what we say and do
Is eloquent, is well —but 't is not true !
And then we will no more be rack'd
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power ;
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call !
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey
A melancholy into all our day.

Only — but this is rare —
When a beloved hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours,
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,
When our world-deafen'd ear
Is by the tones of a lov'd voice caress'd —
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
And what we mean, we say, and what we would, we know.
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
Wherein he doth for ever chase
The flying and elusive shadow, rest.
An air of coolness plays upon his face,
And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
And then he thinks he knows
The hills where his life rose,
And the sea where it goes.

MEMORIAL VERSES

APRIL, 1850

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
But one such death remain'd to come ;
The last poetic voice is dumb —
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bow'd our head and held our breath.
He taught us little ; but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law ;
And yet with reverential awe
We watch'd the fount of fiery life
Which serv'd for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said :
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head.
Physician of the iron age,
Goethe has done his pilgrimage.
He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear :
And struck his finger on the place,
And said : *Thou ailest here, and here !*
He look'd on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power ;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life —
He said : *The end is everywhere,*
Art still has truth, take refuge there !
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth ! — Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice !
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world convey'd,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades, and the mournful gloom.
Wordsworth has gone from us — and ye,
Ah, may ye feel his voice as we !
He too upon a wintery clime
Had fallen —on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round ;
He spoke, and loos'd our hearts in tears.

He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth,
Smiles broke from us, and we had ease ;
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again ;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth return'd ; for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furl'd,
The freshness of the early world.

Ah ! since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force ;
But where will Europe's latter hour
Again find Wordsworth's healing power ?
Others will teach us how to dare,
And against fear our breast to steel ;
Others will strengthen us to bear —
But who, ah ! who, will make us feel ?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly —
But who, like him, will put it by ?
Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha, with thy living wave !
Sing him thy best ! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

GEIST'S GRAVE

Four years ! — and didst thou stay above
The ground, which hides thee now, but four ?
And all that life, and all that love,
Were crowded, Geist ! into no more ?

Only four years those winning ways,
Which make me for thy presence yearn,
Call'd us to pet thee or to praise,
Dear little friend ! at every turn ?

That loving heart, that patient soul,
Had they indeed no longer span,
To run their course, and reach their goal,
And read their homily to man ?

That liquid, melancholy eye,
From whose pathetic, soul-fed springs
Seem'd urging the Virgilian cry,[1]
The sense of tears in mortal things —

That steadfast, mournful strain, consol'd
By spirits gloriously gay,
And temper of heroic mould —
What, was four years their whole short day ?

Yes, only four ! — and not the course
Of all the centuries yet to come,
And not the infinite resource
Of Nature, with her countless sum

Of figures, with her fulness vast
Of new creation evermore,
Can ever quite repeat the past,
Or just thy little self restore.

Stern law of every mortal lot !
Which man, proud man, finds hard to bear,
And builds himself I know not what
Of second life I know not where.

But thou, when struck thine hour to go,
On us, who stood despondent by,
A meek last glance of love didst throw,
And humbly lay thee down to die.

Yet would we keep thee in our heart —
Would fix our favorite on the scene,
Nor let thee utterly depart
And be as if thou ne'er hadst been.

And so there rise these lines of verse
On lips that rarely form them now ;
While to each other we rehearse :
Such ways, such arts, such looks hadst thou !

We stroke thy broad brown paws again,
We bid thee to thy vacant chair,
We greet thee by the window-pane,
We hear thy scuffle on the stair.

We see the flaps of thy large ears
Quick rais'd to ask which way we go ;
Crossing the frozen lake, appears
Thy small black figure on the snow !

Nor to us only art thou dear
Who mourn thee in thine English home ;
Thou hast thine absent master's tear,
Dropp'd by the far Australian foam.

Thy memory lasts both here and there,
And thou shalt live as long as we.
And after that — thou dost not care !
In us was all the world to thee.

Yet, fondly zealous for thy fame,
Even to a date beyond our own
We strive to carry down thy name,
By mounded turf, and graven stone.

[1] Sunt lacrimæ rerum !

We lay thee, close within our reach,
Here, where the grass is smooth and warm,
Between the holly and the beech,
Where oft we watch'd thy couchant form,

Asleep, yet lending half an ear
To travellers on the Portsmouth road ; —
There build we thee, O guardian dear,
Mark'd with a stone, thy last abode !

Then some, who through this garden pass,
When we too, like thyself, are clay,
Shall see thy grave upon the grass,
And stop before the stone, and say :

People who lived here long ago
Did by this stone, it seems, intend
To name for future times to know
The dachs-hound, Geist, their little friend.

Charles Kent

POPE AT TWICKENHAM

BEYOND a hundred years and more,
A garden lattice like a door
  Stands open in the sun,
Admitting fitful winds that set
Astir the fragrant mignonette
  In waves of speckled dun :

Sweet waves, above whose odorous flow
Red roses bud, red roses blow,
  In beds that gem the lawn —
Enamell'd rings and stars of flowers,
By summer beams and vernal showers
  From earth nutritious drawn.

Within the broad bay-window, there,
Lo ! huddled in his easy-chair,
  One hand upon his knee,
A hand so thin, so wan, so frail,
It tells of pains and griefs a tale,
  A small bent form I see.

The day is fair, the hour is noon,
From neighboring thicket thrills the boon
  The nuthatch yields in song :
All drench'd with recent rains, the leaves
Are dripping — drip the sheltering eaves,
  The dropping notes among.

And twinkling diamonds in the grass
Show where the flitting zephyrs pass,
  That shake the green blades dry ;
And golden radiance fills the air
And gilds the floating gossamer
  That glints and trembles by.

Yet, blind to each familiar grace,
Strange anguish on his pallid face,
  And eyes of dreamful hue,
That lonely man sits brooding there,
Still huddled in his easy-chair,
  With memories life will rue.

Where bay might crown that honor'd head,
A homely crumpled nightcap spread
  Half veils the careworn brows ;
In morning-gown of rare brocade
His puny shrunken shape array'd
  His sorrowing soul avows :

Avows in every dropping line
Dejection words not thus define
  So eloquent of woe ;
Yet never to those mournful eyes,
The heart's full-brimming fountains, rise
  Sweet tears to overflow.

No token here of studied grief,
But plainest signs that win belief,
  A simple scene and true.
Beside the mourner's chair display'd,
The matin meal's slight comforts laid
  Trimly the board bestrew.

'Mid silvery sheen of burnish'd plate,
The chill'd and tarnish'd chocolate
  On snow-white damask stands ;
Untouch'd the trivial lures remain
In dainty pink-tinged porcelain,
  Still ranged by usual hands.

A drowsy bee above the cream
Hums loitering in the sunny gleam
  That tips each rim with gold ;
A checker'd maze of light and gloom
Floats in the quaintly-litter'd room
  With varying charms untold.

Why sits that silent watcher there,
Still brooding with that face of care,
  That gaze of tearless pain ?
What bonds of woe his spirit bind,
What treasure lost can leave behind
  Such stings within his brain ?

He dreams of one who lies above,
He never more in life can love —
  That mother newly dead ;
He waits the artist-friend whose skill
Shall catch the angel-beauty still
  Upon her features spread.

A reverent sorrow fills the air,
And makes a throne of grief the chair
  Where filial genius mourns :
Death proving still, at direst need,
Life's sceptre-wand — a broken reed,
  Love's wreath — a crown of thorns.

William Caldwell Roscoe

TO LA SANSCŒUR

I know not how to call you light,
  Since I myself was lighter ;
Nor can you blame my changing plight
  Who were the first inviter.

I know not which began to range
  Since we were never constant ;
And each when each began to change
  Was found a weak remonstrant.

But this I know, the God of Love
  Doth shake his hand against us,
And scorning says we ne'er did prove
  True passion — but pretences.

THE MASTER-CHORD

Like a musician that with flying finger
Startles the voice of some new instrument,
And, though he know that in one string are blent
All its extremes of sound, yet still doth linger
Among the lighter threads, fearing to start
The deep soul of that one melodious wire,
Lest it, unanswering, dash his high desire,
And spoil the hopes of his expectant heart ;
Thus, with my mistress oft conversing, I
Stir every lighter theme with careless voice,
Gathering sweet music and celestial joys
From the harmonious soul o'er which I fly ;
Yet o'er the one deep master-chord I hover,
And dare not stoop, fearing to tell — I love her.

EARTH

Sad is my lot ; among the shining spheres
Wheeling, I weave incessant day and night,
And ever, in my never-ending flight,
Add woes to woes, and count up tears on tears.
Young wives' and new-born infants' hapless biers
Lie on my breast, a melancholy sight ;
Fresh griefs abhor my fresh returning light ;
Pain and remorse and want fill up my years.
My happier children's farther-piercing eyes
Into the blessed solvent future climb,
And knit the threads of joy and hope and warning ;
But I, the ancient mother, am not wise,
And, shut within the blind obscure of time,
Roll on from morn to night, and on from night to morning.

William Johnson Cory

MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH

You promise heavens free from strife,
  Pure truth, and perfect change of will ;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
  So sweet, I fain would breathe it still ;
Your chilly stars I can forego,
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
  One great reality above :
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
  And child-like hide myself in love.

Show me what angels feel. Till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal quires,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains :
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remember'd tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away ;
All beauteous things for which we live
By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them, is because they die.

HERACLEITUS[1]

They told me, Heracleitus, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to shed.
I wept, as I remember'd how often you and I
Had tir'd the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of gray ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake ;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

A POOR FRENCH SAILOR'S SCOTTISH SWEETHEART

I cannot forget my Joe,
I bid him be mine in sleep ;
But battle and woe have changed him so
There 's nothing to do but weep.

My mother rebukes me yet,
And I never was meek before ;
His jacket is wet, his lip cold set,
He 'll trouble our home no more.

Oh, breaker of reeds that bend !
Oh, quencher of tow that smokes !
I 'd rather descend to my sailor friend
Than prosper with lofty folks.

I 'm lying beside the gowan,
My Joe in the English bay ;
I 'm Annie Rowan, his Annie Rowan,
He called me his Bien-Aimée.

I 'll hearken to all you quote,
Though I 'd rather be deaf and free ;
The little he wrote in the sinking boat
Is Bible and charm for me.

Author Unfound

EPITAPH OF DIONYSIA

Here doth Dionysia lie :
She whose little wanton foot,
Tripping (ah, too carelessly !),
Touch'd this tomb, and fell into 't.

Trip no more shall she, nor fall.
And her trippings were so few !
Summers only eight in all
Had the sweet child wander'd through.

But, already, life's few suns
Love's strong seeds had ripen'd warm.
All her ways were winning ones ;
All her cunning was to charm.

And the fancy, in the flower,
While the flesh was in the bud,
Childhood's dawning sex did dower
With warm gusts of womanhood.

Oh what joys by hope begun,
Oh what kisses kiss'd by thought,
What love-deeds by fancy done,
Death to endless dust hath wrought !

Had the fates been kind as thou,
Who, till now, was never cold,
Once Love's aptest scholar, now
Thou hadst been his teacher bold ;

[1] After Callimachus.

But, if buried seeds upthrow
Fruits and flowers ; if flower and fruit
By their nature fitly show
What the seeds are, whence they shoot,
Dionysia, o'er this tomb,
Where thy buried beauties be,
From their dust shall spring and bloom
Loves and graces like to thee.

Coventry Patmore

FROM "THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE"

THE DEAN'S CONSENT

THE Ladies rose. I held the door,
And sigh'd, as her departing grace
Assur'd me that she always wore
A heart as happy as her face ;
And, jealous of the winds that blew,
I dreaded, o'er the tasteless wine,
What fortune momently might do
To hurt the hope that she 'd be mine.

Towards my mark the Dean's talk set :
He praised my "Notes on Abury,"
Read when the Association met
At Sarum ; he was pleas'd to see
I had not stopp'd, as some men had,
At Wrangler and Prize Poet ; last,
He hop'd the business was not bad
I came about : then the wine pass'd.

A full glass prefaced my reply :
I lov'd his daughter, Honor ; I told
My estate and prospects ; might I try
To win her ? At my words so bold
My sick heart sank. Then he : He gave
His glad consent, if I could get
Her love. A dear, good Girl ! she 'd have
Only three thousand pounds as yet ;
More by and by. Yes, his good will
Should go with me ; he would not stir ;

He and my father in old time still
Wish'd I should one day marry her ;
But God so seldom lets us take
Our chosen pathway, when it lies
In steps that either mar or make
Or alter others' destinies,
That, though his blessing and his pray'r
Had help'd, should help, my suit, yet he
Left all to me, his passive share
Consent and opportunity.

My chance, he hop'd, was good : I 'd won
Some name already ; friends and place
Appear'd within my reach, but none
Her mind and manners would not grace.
Girls love to see the men in whom
They invest their vanities admir'd ;
Besides, where goodness is, there room
For good to work will be desir'd.
'T was so with one now pass'd away ;
And what she was at twenty-two,
Honor was now ; and he might say
Mine was a choice I could not rue.

He ceas'd, and gave his hand. He had won
(And all my heart was in my word)
From me the affection of a son,
Whichever fortune Heaven conferr'd !
Well, well, would I take more wine ? Then go
To her ; she makes tea on the lawn
These fine warm afternoons. And so
We went whither my soul was drawn ;
And her light-hearted ignorance
Of interest in our discourse
Fill'd me with love, and seem'd to enhance
Her beauty with pathetic force,
As, through the flowery mazes sweet,
Fronting the wind that flutter'd blithe,
And lov'd her shape, and kiss'd her feet,
Shown to their insteps proud and lithe,
She approach'd, all mildness and young trust,
And ever her chaste and noble air
Gave to love's feast its choicest gust,
A vague, faint augury of despair.

HONORIA'S SURRENDER

From little signs, like little stars,
Whose faint impression on the sense
The very looking straight at mars,
Or only seen by confluence ;
From instinct of a mutual thought,
Whence sanctity of manners flow'd ;

From chance unconscious, and from what
  Concealment, overconscious, show'd ;
Her hand's less weight upon my arm,
  Her lovelier mien ; that match'd with this ;
I found, and felt with strange alarm,
  I stood committed to my bliss.

I grew assur'd, before I ask'd,
  That she 'd be mine without reserve,
And in her unclaim'd graces bask'd,
  At leisure, till the time should serve,
With just enough of dread to thrill
  The hope, and make it trebly dear ;
Thus loth to speak the word to kill
  Either the hope or happy fear.

Till once, through lanes returning late,
  Her laughing sisters lagg'd behind ;
And, ere we reach'd her father's gate,
  We paus'd with one presentient mind ;
And, in the dim and perfum'd mist,
  Their coming stay'd, who, friends to me,
And very women, lov'd to assist
  Love's timid opportunity.

Twice rose, twice died my trembling word ;
  The faint and frail Cathedral chimes
Spake time in music, and we heard
  The chafers rustling in the limes.
Her dress, that touch'd me where I stood,
  The warmth of her confided arm,
Her bosom's gentle neighborhood,
  Her pleasure in her power to charm ;
Her look, her love, her form, her touch,
  The least seem'd most by blissful turn,
Blissful but that it pleas'd too much,
  And taught the wayward soul to yearn.
It was as if a harp with wires
  Was travers'd by the breath I drew ;
And, oh, sweet meeting of desires,
  She, answering, own'd that she lov'd too.

Honoria was to be my bride !
  The hopeless heights of hope were scal'd ;
The summit won, I paus'd and sigh'd,
  As if success itself had fail'd.
It seem'd as if my lips approach'd
  To touch at Tantalus' reward,
And rashly on Eden life encroach'd,
  Half-blinded by the flaming sword.
The whole world's wealthiest and its best,
  So fiercely sought, appear'd, when found,
Poor in its need to be possess'd,
  Poor from its very want of bound.

My queen was crouching at my side,
  By love unsceptred and brought low,
Her awful garb of maiden pride
  All melted into tears like snow ;
The mistress of my reverent thought,
  Whose praise was all I ask'd of fame,
In my close-watch'd approval sought
  Protection as from danger and blame ;
Her soul, which late I lov'd to invest
  With pity for my poor desert,
Buried its face within my breast,
  Like a pet fawn by hunters hurt.

THE MARRIED LOVER

Why, having won her, do I woo ?
  Because her spirit's vestal grace
Provokes me always to pursue,
  But, spirit-like, eludes embrace ;
Because her womanhood is such
  That, as on court-days subjects kiss
The Queen's hand, yet so near a touch
  Affirms no mean familiarness,
Nay, rather marks more fair the height
  Which can with safety so neglect
To dread, as lower ladies might,
  That grace could meet with disrespect,
Thus she with happy favor feeds
  Allegiance from a love so high
That thence no false conceit proceeds
  Of difference bridged, or state put by ;
Because, although in act and word
  As lowly as a wife can be,
Her manners, when they call me lord,
  Remind me 't is by courtesy ;
Not with her least consent of will,
  Which would my proud affection hurt,
But by the noble style that still
  Imputes an unattain'd desert ;
Because her gay and lofty brows,
  When all is won which hope can ask,
Reflect a light of hopeless snows
  That bright in virgin ether bask ;
Because, though free of the outer court
  I am, this Temple keeps its shrine
Sacred to Heaven ; because, in short,
  She 's not and never can be mine.

Feasts satiate ; stars distress with height ;
  Friendship means well, but misses reach,
And wearies in its best delight
  Vex'd with the vanities of speech ;
Too long regarded, roses even
  Afflict the mind with fond unrest ;
And to converse direct with Heaven
  Is oft a labor in the breast ;

Whate'er the up-looking soul admires,
Whate'er the senses' banquet be,
Fatigues at last with vain desires,
Or sickens by satiety;
But truly my delight was more
In her to whom I 'm bound for aye
Yesterday than the day before,
And more to-day than yesterday.

THE GIRL OF ALL PERIODS

"And even our women," lastly grumbles Ben,
"Leaving their nature, dress and talk like men!"
A damsel, as our train stops at Five Ashes,
Down to the station in a dog-cart dashes.
A footman buys her ticket, "Third class, parly;"
And, in huge-button'd coat and "Champagne Charley"
And such scant manhood else as use allows her,
Her two shy knees bound in a single trouser,
With, 'twixt her shapely lips, a violet
Perch'd as a proxy for a cigarette,
She takes her window in our smoking carriage,
And scans us, calmly scorning men and marriage.
Ben frowns in silence; older, I know better
Than to read ladies 'havior in the letter.
This aping man is crafty Love's devising
To make the woman's difference more surprising;
And, as for feeling wroth at such rebelling,
Who 'd scold the child for now and then repelling
Lures with "I won't!" or for a moment's straying
In its sure growth towards more full obeying?
"Yes, she had read the 'Legend of the Ages,'
And George Sand too, skipping the wicked pages."
And, whilst we talk'd, her protest firm and perky
Against mankind, I thought, grew lax and jerky;
And, at a compliment, her mouth's compressure
Nipp'd in its birth a little laugh of pleasure;
And smiles, forbidden her lips, as weakness horrid,
Broke, in grave lights, from eyes and chin and forehead;
And, as I push'd kind 'vantage 'gainst the scorner,
The two shy knees press'd shyer to the corner;
And Ben began to talk with her, the rather
Because he found out that he knew her father,
Sir Francis Applegarth, of Fenny Compton,
And danced once with her sister Maude at Brompton;
And then he star'd until he quite confus'd her,
More pleas'd with her than I, who but excus'd her;
And, when she got out, he, with sheepish glances,
Said he 'd stop too, and call on old Sir Francis.

FROM "THE UNKNOWN EROS"

THE TOYS

My little son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And mov'd and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said:

Ah, when at last we lie with tranced breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And Thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou 'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
"I will be sorry for their childishness."

THE TWO DESERTS

Not greatly mov'd with awe am I
To learn that we may spy
Five thousand firmaments beyond our own.
The best that 's known
Of the heavenly bodies does them credit small.
View'd close, the Moon's fair ball
Is of ill objects worst,
A corpse in Night's highway, naked, fire-scarr'd, accurst ;
And now they tell
That the Sun is plainly seen to boil and burst
Too horribly for hell.
So, judging from these two,
As we must do,
The Universe, outside our living Earth,
Was all conceiv'd in the Creator's mirth,
Forecasting at the time Man's spirit deep,
To make dirt cheap.
Put by the Telescope !
Better without it man may see,
Stretch'd awful in the hush'd midnight,
The ghost of his eternity.
Give me the nobler glass that swells to the eye
The things which near us lie,
Till Science rapturously hails,
In the minutest water-drop,
A torment of innumerable tails.
These at the least do live.
But rather give
A mind not much to pry
Beyond our royal-fair estate
Betwixt these deserts blank of small and great.
Wonder and beauty our own courtiers are,
Pressing to catch our gaze,
And out of obvious ways
Ne'er wandering far.

REGINA CŒLI

Say, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see
In a mild, silent little Maid like thee ?
And was it awful, in that narrow house,
With God for Babe and Spouse ?
Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one
Apt to find Him in Husband and in Son,
Nothing to thee came strange in this.
Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss :
Wondrous, for, though
True Virgin lives not but does know,
(Howbeit none ever yet confess'd,)
That God lies really in her breast,
Of thine He made His special nest !
And so
All mothers worship little feet,
And kiss the very ground they 've trod ;
But, ah, thy little Baby sweet
Who was indeed thy God !

Walter C. Smith

DAUGHTERS OF PHILISTIA

FROM "OLRIG GRANGE"

Lady Anne Dewhurst on a crimson couch
Lay, with a rug of sable o'er her knees,
In a bright boudoir in Belgravia ;
Most perfectly array'd in shapely robe
Of sumptuous satin, lit up here and there
With scarlet touches, and with costly lace,
Nice-finger'd maidens knotted in Brabant ;
And all around her spread magnificence
Of bronzes, Sèvres vases, marquetrie,
Rare buhl, and bric-à-brac of every kind,
From Rome and Paris and the centuries
Of far-off beauty. All of goodly color,
Or graceful form that could delight the eye,
In orderly disorder lay around,
And flowers with perfume scented the warm air.

Stately and large and beautiful was she
Spite of her sixty summers, with an eye
Train'd to soft languors, that could also flash,
Keen as a sword and sharp — a black bright eye,
Deep sunk beneath an arch of jet. She had
A weary look, and yet the weariness
Seem'd not so native as the worldliness
Which blended with it. Weary and worldly, she
Had quite resign'd herself to misery
In this sad vale of tears, but fully meant
To nurse her sorrow in a sumptuous fashion,
And make it an expensive luxury ;
For nothing she esteem'd that nothing cost.

Beside her, on a table round, inlaid
With precious stones by Roman art design'd,
Lay phials, scent, a novel and a Bible,
A pill box, and a wine glass, and a book
On the Apocalypse ; for she was much
Addicted unto physic and religion,
And her physician had prescrib'd for her
Jellies and wines and cheerful Literature.
The Book on the Apocalypse was writ
By her chosen pastor, and she took the novel
With the dry sherry, and the pills prescrib'd.
A gorgeous, pious, comfortable life
Of misery she lived ; and all the sins
Of all her house, and all the nation's sins,
And all shortcomings of the Church and State,
And all the sins of all the world beside,
Bore as her special cross, confessing them
Vicariously day by day, and then
She comforted her heart, which needed it,
With bric-à-brac and jelly and old wine.

Beside the fire, her elbow on the mantel,
And forehead resting on her finger-tips,
Shading a face where sometimes loom'd a frown,
And sometimes flash'd a gleam of bitter scorn,
Her daughter stood; no more a graceful girl,
But in the glory of her womanhood,
Stately and haughty. One who might have been
A noble woman in a nobler world,
But now was only woman of her world ;
With just enough of better thought to know
It was not noble, and despise it all,
And most herself for making it her all.
A woman, complex, intricate, involv'd ;
Wrestling with self, yet still by self subdued ;
Scorning herself for being what she was,
And yet unable to be that she would ;
Uneasy with the sense of possible good
Never attain'd, nor sought, except in fits
Ending in failures ; conscious, too, of power
Which found no purpose to direct its force,
And so came back upon herself, and grew
An inward fret. The caged bird sometimes dash'd
Against the wires, and sometimes sat and pin'd,
But mainly peck'd her sugar, and eyed her glass,
And trill'd her graver thoughts away in song.

Mother and daughter — yet a childless mother,
And motherless her daughter ; for the world
Had gash'd a chasm between, impassable,
And they had nought in common, neither love,
Nor hate, nor anything except a name.
Yet both were of the world; and she not least
Whose world was the religious one, and stretch'd
A kind of isthmus 'tween the Devil and God,
A slimy, oozy mud, where mandrakes grew,
Ghastly, with intertwisted roots, and things
Amphibious haunted, and the leathern bat
Flicker'd about its twilight evermore.

THE SELF-EXILED

There came a soul to the gate of Heaven
Gliding slow —
A soul that was ransom'd and forgiven,
And white as snow :
And the angels all were silent.

A mystic light beam'd from the face
Of the radiant maid,
But there also lay on its tender grace
A mystic shade :
And the angels all were silent.

As sunlit clouds by a zephyr borne
Seem not to stir,
So to the golden gates of morn
They carried her :
And the angels all were silent.

"Now open the gate, and let her in,
And fling it wide,
For she has been cleans'd from stain of sin,"
St. Peter cried :
And the angels all were silent.

"Though I am cleans'd from stain of sin,"
She answer'd low,
"I came not hither to enter in,
Nor may I go :"
And the angels all were silent.

"I come," she said, "to the pearly door,
To see the Throne
Where sits the Lamb on the Sapphire Floor,
With God alone :"
And the angels all were silent.

"I come to hear the new song they sing
To Him that died,
And note where the healing waters spring
From His pierced side :"
And the angels all were silent.

"But I may not enter there," she said,
"For I must go
Across the gulf where the guilty dead
Lie in their woe :"
And the angels all were silent.

"If I enter heaven I may not pass
To where they be,
Though the wail of their bitter pain, alas !
Tormenteth me :"
And the angels all were silent.

"If I enter heaven I may not speak
My soul's desire
For them that are lying distraught and weak
In flaming fire :"
And the angels all were silent.

"I had a brother, and also another
Whom I lov'd well ;
What if, in anguish, they curse each other
In the depths of hell ?"
And the angels all were silent.

"How could I touch the golden harps,
When all my praise
Would be so wrought with grief-full warps
Of their sad days ?"
And the angels all were silent.

"How love the lov'd who are sorrowing,
And yet be glad ?
How sing the songs ye are fain to sing,
While I am sad ?"
And the angels all were silent.

"Oh, clear as glass is the golden street
Of the city fair,
And the tree of life it maketh sweet
The lightsome air :"
And the angels all were silent.

"And the white-rob'd saints with their crowns and palms
Are good to see,
And oh, so grand are the sounding psalms !
But not for me :"
And the angels all were silent.

"I come where there is no night," she said,
"To go away,
And help, if I yet may help, the dead
That have no day."
And the angels all were silent.

St. Peter he turned the keys about,
And answer'd grim :
"Can you love the Lord, and abide without,
Afar from Him ?"
And the angels all were silent.

"Can you love the Lord who died for you,
And leave the place
Where His glory is all disclos'd to view,
And tender grace ?"
And the angels all were silent.

"They go not out who come in here ;
It were not meet :
Nothing they lack, for He is here,
And bliss complete."
And the angels all were silent.

"Should I be nearer Christ," she said,
"By pitying less
The sinful living or woeful dead
In their helplessness ?"
And the angels all were silent.

"Should I be liker Christ were I
To love no more
The lov'd, who in their anguish lie
Outside the door?"
And the angels all were silent.

"Did He not hang on the curs'd tree,
And bear its shame,
And clasp to His heart, for love of me,
My guilt and blame?"
And the angels all were silent.

"Should I be liker, nearer Him,
Forgetting this,
Singing all day with the Seraphim,
In selfish bliss?"
And the angels all were silent.

The Lord Himself stood by the gate,
And heard her speak
Those tender words compassionate,
Gentle and meek:
And the angels all were silent.

Now, pity is the touch of God
In human hearts,
And from that way He ever trod
He ne'er departs:
And the angels all were silent.

And He said, "Now will I go with you,
Dear child of love,
I am weary of all this glory, too,
In heaven above:"
And the angels all were silent.

"We will go seek and save the lost,
If they will hear,
They who are worst but need me most,
And all are dear:"
And the angels were not silent.

Francis Turner Palgrave

THE ANCIENT AND MODERN MUSES

The monument outlasting bronze
Was promis'd well by bards of old;
The lucid outline of their lay
Its sweet precision keeps for aye,
Fix'd in the ductile language-gold.

But we who work with smaller skill,
And less refin'd material mould, —
This close conglomerate English speech,
Bequest of many tribes, that each
Brought here and wrought at from of old,

Residuum rough, eked out by rhyme,
Barbarian ornament uncouth, —
Our hope is less to last through Art
Than deeper searching of the heart,
Than broader range of utter'd truth.

One keen-cut group, one deed or aim
Athenian Sophocles could show,
And rest content; but Shakespeare's stage
Must hold the glass to every age, —
A thousand forms and passions glow
Upon the world-wide canvas. So
With larger scope our art we play;
And if the crown be harder won,
Diviner rays around it run,
With strains of fuller harmony.

PRO MORTUIS

What should a man desire to leave?
A flawless work; a noble life:
Some music harmoniz'd from strife,
Some finish'd thing, ere the slack hands at eve
Drop, should be his to leave.

One gem of song, defying age;
A hard-won fight; a well-work'd farm;
A law no guile can twist to harm;
Some tale, as our lost Thackeray's bright, or sage
As the just Hallam's page.

Or, in life's homeliest, meanest spot,
With temperate step from year to year
To move within his little sphere,
Leaving a pure name to be known, or not, —
This is a true man's lot.

He dies : he leaves the deed or name,
A gift forever to his land,
In trust to Friendship's prudent hand,
Round 'gainst all adverse shocks to guard his fame,
Or to the world proclaim.

But the imperfect thing or thought, —
The crudities and yeast of youth,
The dubious doubt, the twilight truth,
The work that for the passing day was wrought,
The schemes that came to nought,

The sketch half-way 'twixt verse and prose
That mocks the finish'd picture true,
The quarry whence the statue grew,
The scaffolding 'neath which the palace rose,
The vague abortive throes

And fever-fits of joy or gloom : —
In kind oblivion let them be !
Nor has the dead worse foe than he
Who rakes these sweepings of the artist's room,
And piles them on his tomb.

Ah, 't is but little that the best,
Frail children of a fleeting hour,
Can leave of perfect fruit or flower !
Ah, let all else be graciously supprest
When man lies down to rest !

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1845

Gentle and grave, in simple dress,
And features by keen mountain air
Moulded to solemn ruggedness,
The man we came to see sat there :
Not apt for speech, nor quickly stirr'd
Unless when heart to heart replied;
A bearing equally remov'd
From vain display or sullen pride.

The sinewy frame yet spoke of one
Known to the hillsides : on his head
Some five-and-seventy winters gone
Their crown of perfect white had shed: —
As snow-tipp'd summits toward the sun
In calm of lonely radiance press,
Touch'd by the broadening light of death
With a serener pensiveness.

O crown of venerable age !
O brighter crown of well-spent years !
The bard, the patriot, and the sage,
The heart that never bow'd to fears !
That was an age of soaring souls ;
Yet none with a more liberal scope
Survey'd the sphere of human things ;
None with such manliness of hope.

Others, perchance, as keenly felt,
As musically sang as he ;
To Nature as devoutly knelt,
Or toil'd to serve humanity :
But none with those ethereal notes,
That star-like sweep of self-control ;
The insight into worlds unseen,
The lucid sanity of soul.

The fever of our fretful life,
The autumn poison of the air,
The soul with its own self at strife,
He saw and felt, but could not share :
With eye made clear by pureness, pierced
The life of Man and Nature through ;
And read the heart of common things,
Till new seem'd old, and old was new.

To his own self not always just,
Bound in the bonds that all men share, —
Confess the failings as we must,
The lion's mark is always there !
Nor any song so pure, so great
Since his, who closed the sightless eyes,
Our Homer of the war in Heaven,
To wake in his own Paradise.

O blaring trumpets of the world !
O glories, in their budding sere !
O flaunting roll of Fame unfurl'd !
Here was the king — the hero here !
It was a strength and joy for life
In that great presence once to be ;
That on the boy he gently smil'd,
That those white hands were laid on me.

A LITTLE CHILD'S HYMN

FOR NIGHT AND MORNING

Thou that once, on mother's knee,
Wast a little one like me,
When I wake or go to bed
Lay thy hands about my head ;
Let me feel thee very near,
Jesus Christ, our Saviour dear.

Be beside me in the light,
Close by me through all the night ;
Make me gentle, kind, and true,
Do what mother bids me do ;
Help and cheer me when I fret,
And forgive when I forget.

Once wast thou in cradle laid,
Baby bright in manger-shade,
With the oxen and the cows,
And the lambs outside the house :
Now thou art above the sky :
Canst thou hear a baby cry ?

Thou art nearer when we pray,
Since thou art so far away ;
Thou my little hymn wilt hear,
Jesus Christ, our Saviour dear,
Thou that once, on mother's knee,
Wast a little one like me.

A DANISH BARROW

ON THE EAST DEVON COAST

LIE still, old Dane, below thy heap !
A sturdy-back and sturdy-limb,
Whoe'er he was, I warrant him
Upon whose mound the single sheep
Browses and tinkles in the sun,
Within the narrow vale alone.

Lie still, old Dane ! This restful scene
Suits well thy centuries of sleep :
The soft brown roots above thee creep,
The lotus flaunts his ruddy sheen,
And, — vain memento of the spot, —
The turquoise-eyed forget-me-not.

Lie still ! Thy mother-land herself
Would know thee not again : no more
The Raven from the northern shore
Hails the bold crew to push for pelf,
Through fire and blood and slaughter'd kings
'Neath the black terror of his wings.

And thou, — thy very name is lost !
The peasant only knows that here
Bold Alfred scoop'd thy flinty bier,
And pray'd a foeman's prayer, and tost
His auburn head, and said, "One more
Of England's foes guards England's shore,"

And turn'd and pass'd to other feats,
And left thee in thine iron robe,
To circle with the circling globe,
While Time's corrosive dewdrop eats
The giant warrior to a crust
Of earth in earth, and rust in rust.

So lie : and let the children play
And sit like flowers upon thy grave
And crown with flowers, — that hardly have
A briefer blooming-tide than they ; —
By hurrying years urged on to rest,
As thou, within the Mother's breast.

Thomas Henry Huxley

TENNYSON

(WESTMINSTER ABBEY: OCTOBER 12, 1892)

GIB DIESEN TODTEN MIR HERAUS ![1]

(The Minster speaks)

BRING me my dead !
To me that have grown,
Stone laid upon stone,
As the stormy brood
Of English blood
Has wax'd and spread
And fill'd the world,
With sails unfurl'd ;
With men that may not lie ;
With thoughts that cannot die.

Bring me my dead !
Into the storied hall,
Where I have garner'd all
My harvest without weed ;
My chosen fruits of goodly seed ,
And lay him gently down among
The men of state, the men of song :
The men that would not suffer wrong :
The thought-worn chieftains of the mind :
Head-servants of the human kind.

[1] Don Carlos.

Bring me my dead !
The autumn sun shall shed
Its beams athwart the bier's
Heap'd blooms : a many tears
Shall flow ; his words, in cadence sweet and strong,
Shall voice the full hearts of the silent throng.
Bring me my dead !

And oh ! sad wedded mourner, seeking still
For vanish'd hand clasp : drinking in thy fill
Of holy grief ; forgive, that pious theft
Robs thee of all, save memories, left :
Not thine to kneel beside the grassy mound
While dies the western glow ; and all around
Is silence ; and the shadows closer creep
And whisper softly : All must fall asleep.

Arthur Joseph Munby

DORIS : A PASTORAL

I SAT with Doris, the shepherd-maiden ;
Her crook was laden with wreathed flowers :
I sat and woo'd her, through sunlight wheeling
And shadows stealing, for hours and hours.

And she, my Doris, whose lap encloses
Wild summer-roses of sweet perfume,
The while I sued her, kept hush'd and hearken'd,
Till shades had darken'd from gloss to gloom.

She touch'd my shoulder with fearful finger;
She said, "We linger, we must not stay :
My flock's in danger, my sheep will wander ;
Behold them yonder, how far they stray ! "

I answer'd bolder, "Nay, let me hear you,
And still be near you, and still adore !
No wolf nor stranger will touch one yearling :
Ah ! stay, my darling, a moment more ! "

She whisper'd, sighing, "There will be sorrow
Beyond to-morrow, if I lose to-day ;
My fold unguarded, my flock unfolded,
I shall be scolded and sent away."

Said I, denying, "If they do miss you,
They ought to kiss you when you get home ;
And well rewarded by friend and neighbor
Should be the labor from which you come."

"They might remember," she answer'd meekly,
"That lambs are weakly, and sheep are wild ;
But if they love me, it's none so fervent :
I am a servant, and not a child."

Then each hot ember glow'd within me,
And love did win me to swift reply :
"Ah ! do but prove me ; and none shall bind you,
Nor fray nor find you, until I die."

She blush'd and started, and stood awaiting,
As if debating in dreams divine ;
But I did brave them ; I told her plainly
She doubted vainly, she must be mine.

So we, twin-hearted, from all the valley
Did rouse and rally her nibbling ewes ;
And homeward drave them, we two together,
Through blooming heather and gleaming dews.

That simple duty fresh grace did lend her,
My Doris tender, my Doris true ;
That I, her warder, did always bless her,
And often press her to take her due.

And now in beauty she fills my dwelling,
With love excelling, and undefil'd ;
And love doth guard her, both fast and fervent,
No more a servant, nor yet a child.

FROM "DOROTHY: A COUNTRY STORY"

DOROTHY

DOROTHY goes with her pails to the ancient well in the courtyard
Daily at gray of morn, daily ere twilight at eve;
Often and often again she winds at the mighty old windlass,
Still with her strong red arms landing the bucket aright:
Then, her beechen yoke press'd down on her broad square shoulders,
Stately, erect, like a queen, she with her burden returns:
She with her burden returns to the fields that she loves, to the cattle
Lowing beside the troughs, welcoming her and her pails.
Dorothy — who is she? She is only a servant-of-all-work;
Servant at White Rose Farm, under the cliff in the vale:
Under the sandstone cliff, where martins build in the springtime,
Hard by the green level meads, hard by the streams of the Yore.
Oh, what a notable lass is our Dolly, the pride of the dairy!
Stalwart and tall as a man, strong as a heifer to work:
Built for beauty, indeed, but certainly built for labor —
Witness her muscular arm, witness the grip of her hand!

. . . . . .

Weakly her mistress was, and weakly the two little daughters;
But by her master's side Dorothy wrought like a son:
Wrought out of doors on the farm, and labor'd in dairy and kitchen,
Doing the work of two; help and support of them all.
Rough were her broad brown hands, and within, ah me! they were horny;
Rough were her thick ruddy arms, shapely and round as they were;
Rough too her glowing cheeks; and her sunburnt face and forehead
Browner than cairngorm seem'd, set in her amber-bright hair.
Yet 't was a handsome face; the beautiful regular features
Labor could never spoil, ignorance could not degrade:
And in her clear blue eyes bright gleams of intelligence linger'd;
And on her warm red mouth, Love might have 'lighted and lain.
Never an unkind word nor a rude unseemly expression
Came from that soft red mouth; nor in those sunny blue eyes
Lived there a look that belied the frankness of innocent girlhood —
Fearless, because it is pure; gracious, and gentle, and calm.
Have you not seen such a face, among rural hardworking maidens
Born but of peasant stock, free from our Dorothy's shame?
Just such faces as hers — a countenance open and artless,
Where no knowledge appears, culture, nor vision of grace;
Yet which an open-air life and simple and strenuous labor
Fills with a charm of its own — precious, and warm from the heart?
Hers was full of that charm; and besides, was something ennobled,
Something adorn'd, by thoughts due to a gentle descent:
So that a man should say, if he saw her afield at the milking,
Or with her sickle at work reaping the barley or beans,
"There is a strapping wench — a lusty lass of a thousand,
"Able to fend for herself, fit for the work of a man!"
But if he came more near, and she lifted her face to behold him,
"Ah," he would cry, "what a change! Surely a *lady* is here!"
Yes — if a lady be one who is gracious and quiet in all things,
Thinking no evil at all, helpful wherever she can;
Then too at White Rose Farm, by the martins' cliff in the valley,
There was a lady; and she was but the servant of all.
True, when she spoke, her speech was the homely speech of the country;

Rough with quaint antique words, picturesque sayings of old :
And, for the things that she said, they were nothing but household phrases —
News of the poultry and kine, tidings of village and home ;
But there was something withal in her musical voice and her manner
Gave to such workaday talk touches of higher degree.
So too, abroad and alone, when she saw the sun rise o'er the meadows,
Or amid golden clouds saw him descending at eve ;
Though no poetic thought, no keen and rapturous insight,
Troubled her childlike soul, yet she could wonder and gaze ;
Yet she could welcome the morn for its beauty as well as its brightness
And, in the evening glow, think — not of supper alone.

COUNTRY KISSES

Curious, the ways of these folk of humble and hardy condition :
Kisses, amongst ourselves, bless me, how much they imply !
Ere you can come to a kiss, you must scale the whole gamut of courtship —
Introduction first ; pretty attentions and words ;
Tentative looks ; and at length, perhaps the touch of a finger ;
Then the confession ; and *then* (if she allow it) the kiss.
So that a kiss comes last — 't is the crown and seal of the whole thing ;
Passion avow'd by you, fondly accepted by her.
But in our Dorothy's class, a kiss only marks the beginning :
Comes me a light-hearted swain, thinking of nothing at all ;
Flings his fustian sleeve round the ample waist of the maiden ;
Kisses her cheek, and she — laughingly thrusts him away.
Why, 't is a matter of course ; every good-looking damsel expects it ;
'T is but the homage, she feels, paid to her beauty by men :
So that, at Kiss-in-the-Ring — an innocent game and a good one —
Strangers in plenty may kiss : nay, she pursues, in her turn.

DOROTHY'S ROOM

'T was but a poor little room : a farm-servant's loft in a garret ;
One small window and door ; never a chimney at all ;
One little stool by the bed, and a remnant of cast-away carpet ;
But on the floor, by the wall, carefully dusted and bright,
Stood the green-painted box, our Dorothy's closet and wardrobe,
Holding her treasures, her all — all that she own'd in the world !
Linen and hosen were there, coarse linen and home-knitted hosen ;
Handkerchiefs bought at the fair, aprons and smocks not a few ;
Kirtles for warmth when afield, and frocks for winter and summer,
Blue-spotted, lilac, gray ; cotton and woolen and serge ;
All her simple attire, save the clothes she felt most like herself in —
Rough, coarse workaday clothes, fit for a laborer's wear.
There was her Sunday array — the boots, and the shawl, and the bonnet,
Solemnly folded apart, not to be lightly assumed ;
There was her jewelry, too : 't was a brooch (she had worn it this evening)
Made of cairngorm stone — really too splendid for her !
Which on a Martlemas Day Mr. Robert had bought for a fairing :
Little she thought, just then, how she would value it now !
As for her sewing gear, her housewife, her big brass thimble,
Knitting and suchlike work, such as her fingers could do,
That was away downstairs, in a dresser-drawer in the kitchen,
Ready for use of a night, when she was tidied and clean.
Item, up there in the chest were her books : "The Dairyman's Daughter ;"
Ballads ; "The Olney Hymns ;" Bible and Prayer-book, of course :

That was her library ; these were the limits of Dorothy's reading ;
Wholesome, but scanty indeed : was it then all that she knew ?
Nay, for like other good girls, she had profited much by her schooling
Under the mighty three — Nature, and Labor, and Life :
Mightier they than books ; if books could have only come after,
Thoughts of instructed minds filtering down into hers.
That was impossible now ; what she had been, she was, and she would be ;
Only a farm-serving lass — only a peasant, I fear !

Well — on that green-lidded box, her name was painted in yellow ;
Dorothy Crump were the words. Crump ? What a horrible name !
Yes, but they gave it to her, because (like the box) 't was her mother's ;
Ready to hand — though of course *she* had no joy in the name :
She had no kin — and indeed, she never had needed a surname ;
Never had used one at all, never had made one her own :
"Dolly" she was to herself, and to every one else she was "Dolly" ;
Nothing but "Dolly" ; and so, that was enough for a name.
Thus then, her great, green box, her one undoubted possession,
Stood where it was ; like her, "never went nowhere" at all ;
Waited, perhaps, as of old, some beautiful Florentine bride-chest,
Till, in the fulness of time, He, the Beloved, appears.—
Was there naught else in her room ? nothing handy for washing or dressing ?
Yes ; on a plain deal stand, basin, and ewer, and dish :
All of them empty, unused ; for the sink was the place of her toilet ;
Save on a Sunday — and then, she too could dress at her ease ;
Then, by the little sidewall of the diamonded dormer-window
She at a sixpenny glass brush'd out her bonny bright hair.
Ah, what a poor little room ! Would *you* like to sleep in it, ladies ?
Innocence sleeps there unharm'd ; Honor, and Beauty, and Peace —
Love, too, has come ; and with these, even dungeons were easily cheerful ;
But, for our Dorothy's room, it is no dungeon at all.
No ! through the latticed panes of the diamonded dormer-window
Dorothy looks on a world free and familiar and fair :
Looks on the fair farm-yard, where the poultry and cattle she lives with
Bellow and cackle and low — music delightful to her ;
Looks on the fragrant fields, with cloud-shadows flying above them,
Singing of birds in the air, woodlands and waters around.
She in those fragrant meads has wrought, every year of her girlhood ;
Over those purple lands she, too, has follow'd the plough ;
And, like a heifer afield, or a lamb that is yean'd in the meadows,
She, to herself and to us, seems like a part of it all.

BEAUTY AT THE PLOUGH

Thus then, one beautiful day, in the sweet, cool air of October,
High up on Breakheart Field, under the skirts of the wood,
Dolly was ploughing : she wore (why did I not sooner describe it ?)
Just such a dress as they all — all the farm-servants around ;
Only, it seem'd to be hers by a right divine and a fitness —
Color and pattern and shape suited so aptly to her.
First, on her well-set head a lilac hood-bonnet of cotton,
Framing her amberbright hair, shading her neck from the sun ;
Then, on her shoulders a shawl ; a coarse red kerchief of woolen,
Matching the glow of her cheeks, lighting her berry-brown skin ;
Then came a blue cotton frock — dark blue, and spotted with yellow —
Sleev'd to the elbows alone, leaving her bonny arms bare ;
So that those ruddy brown arms, with the dim, dull blue for a background

Seem'd not so rough as they were — softer in color and grain.
All round her ample waist her frock was gather'd and kilted,
Showing her kirtle, that hung down to the calf of the leg:
Lancashire linsey it was, with bands of various color
Striped on a blue-gray ground: sober, and modest, and warm;
Showing her stout firm legs, made stouter by home-knitted stockings;
Ending in strong laced boots, such as a ploughman should wear:
Big solid ironshod boots, that added an inch to her stature;
Studded with nails underneath, shoed like a horse, at the heels.
After a day at plough, all clotted with earth from the furrows,
Oh, how unlike were her boots, Rosa Matilda, to yours!

FLOS FLORUM

One only rose our village maiden wore;
Upon her breast she wore it, in that part
Where many a throbbing pulse doth heave and start
At the mere thought of Love and his sweet lore.
No polish'd gems hath she, no moulded ore,
Nor any other masterpiece of art:
She hath but Nature's masterpiece, her heart;
And that show'd ruddy as the rose she bore
Because that he, who sought for steadfastness
Vainly in other maids, had found it bare
Under the eyelids of this maiden fair,
Under the folds of her most simple dress.
She let him find it; for she lov'd him, too,
As he lov'd her: and all this tale is true.

SWEET NATURE'S VOICE

FROM "SUSAN: A POEM OF DEGREES"

Her Master gave the signal, with a look:
Then, timidly as if afraid, she took
In her rough hands the Laureate's dainty book,
And straight began. But when she did begin,
Her own mute sense of poesy within
Broke forth to hail the poet, and to greet
His graceful fancies and the accents sweet
In which they are express'd. Oh, lately lost,
Long loved, long honor'd, and whose Captain's post
No living bard is competent to fill —
How strange, to the deep heart that now is still,
And to the vanish'd hand, and to the ear
Whose soft melodious measures are so dear
To us who cannot rival them — how strange,
If thou, the lord of such a various range,
Hadst heard this new voice telling Arden's tale!
For this was no prim maiden, scant and pale,
Full of weak sentiment, and thin delight
In pretty rhymes, who mars the resonant might
Of noble verse with arts rhetorical
And simulated frenzy: not at all!
This was a peasant woman; large and strong,
Redhanded, ignorant, unused to song —
Accustom'd rather to the rudest prose.
And yet, there lived within her rustic clothes
A heart as true as Arden's; and a brain,
Keener than his, that counts it false and vain
To seem aught else than simply what she is.
How singular, her faculty of bliss!
Bliss in her servile work; bliss deep and full
In things beyond the vision of the dull,
Whate'er their rank: things beautiful as these
Sonorous lines and solemn harmonies
Suiting the tale they tell of; bliss in love —
Ah, chiefly that! which lifts her soul above
Its common life, and gives to labors coarse
Such fervor of imaginative force
As makes a passion of her basest toil.
Surely this servant-dress was but a foil
To her more lofty being! As she read,
Her accent was as pure, and all she said
As full of interest and of varied grace
As were the changeful moods, that o'er her face
Pass'd, like swift clouds across a windy sky,
At each sad stage of Enoch's history.
Such ease, such pathos, such abandonment
To what she utter'd, moulded as she went
Her soft sweet voice, and with such self-control
Did she, interpreting the poet's soul,

Bridle her own, that when the tale was done
I look'd at her, amaz'd : she seem'd like one
Who from some sphere of music had come down,
And donn'd the white cap and the cotton gown
As if to show how much of skill and art
May dwell unthought of, in the humblest heart.
Yet there was no great mystery to tell :
She felt it deeply, so she read it well.

Isa Craig Knox

THE WOODRUFFE

Thou art the flower of grief to me,
'T is in thy flavor !
Thou keepest the scent of memory,
A sickly savor.
In the moonlight, under the orchard tree,
Thou wert pluck'd and given to me,
For a love favor.

In the moonlight, under the orchard tree,
Ah, cruel flower !
Thou wert pluck'd and given to me,
While a fruitless shower
Of blossoms rain'd on the ground where grew
The woodruffe bed all wet with dew,
In the witching hour.

Under the orchard tree that night
Thy scent was sweetness,
And thou, with thy small star clusters bright
Of pure completeness,
Shedding a pearly lustre bright,
Seem'd, as I gaz'd in the meek moonlight,
A gift of meetness.

"It keeps the scent for years," said he,
(And thou hast kept it) ;
"And when you scent it, think of me."
(He could not mean thus bitterly.)
Ah ! I had swept it
Into the dust where dead things rot,
Had I then believ'd his love was not
What I have wept it.

Between the leaves of this holy book,
O flower undying !
A worthless and wither'd weed in look,
I keep thee lying.
The bloom of my life with thee was pluck'd,
And a close-press'd grief its sap hath suck'd,
Its strength updrying.

Thy circles of leaves, like pointed spears,
My heart pierce often ;
They enter, it inly bleeds, no tears
The hid wounds soften ;
Yet one will I ask to bury thee
In the soft white folds of my shroud with me,
Ere they close my coffin.

Sir Edwin Arnold

FROM "THE LIGHT OF ASIA"

NIRVÂNA

The Books say well, my Brothers ! each man's life
The outcome of his former living is ;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes,
The bygone right breeds bliss.

That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields !
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn. The Silence and the Darkness knew !
So is a man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sow'd,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth ;
And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth.

If he shall labor rightly, rooting these,
And planting wholesome seedlings where they grew,

Fruitful and fair and clean the ground shall be,
And rich the harvest due.

If he who liveth, learning whence woe springs,
Endureth patiently, striving to pay
His utmost debt for ancient evils done
In Love and Truth alway ;

If making none to lack, he thoroughly purge
The lie and lust of self forth from his blood ;
Suffering all meekly, rendering for offence
Nothing but grace and good ;

If he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true ; and rend
Desire from where it clings with bleeding roots,
Till love of life have end :

He — dying — leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count clos'd, whose ills are dead and quit,
Whose good is quick and mighty, far and near,
So that fruits follow it.

No need hath such to live as ye name life ;
That which began in him when he began
Is finish'd : he hath wrought the purpose through
Of what did make him Man.

Never shall yearnings torture him, nor sins
Stain him, nor ache of earthly joys and woes
Invade his safe eternal peace ; nor deaths
And lives recur. He goes

Unto NIRVÂNA. He is one with Life
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
OM, MANI PADME, OM ! the Dewdrop slips
Into the shining sea !

THE CALIPH'S DRAUGHT

UPON a day in Ramadan —
When sunset brought an end of fast,
And in his station every man
Prepar'd to share the glad repast —
Sate Mohtasim in royal state,
The pillaw smok'd upon the gold ;
The fairest slave of those that wait
Mohtasim's jewell'd cup did hold.

Of crystal carven was the cup,
With turquoise set along the brim,
A lid of amber clos'd it up ;
'T was a great king that gave it him.
The slave pour'd sherbet to the brink,
Stirr'd in wild honey and pomegranate,
With snow and rose-leaves cool'd the drink,
And bore it where the Caliph sate.

The Caliph's mouth was dry as bone,
He swept his beard aside to quaff :
The news-reader beneath the throne
Went droning on with *ghain* and *kaf*.
The Caliph drew a mighty breath,
Just then the reader read a word —
And Mohtasim, as grim as death,
Set down the cup and snatch'd his sword.

"*Ann' amratan shureefatee !*"
"Speak clear !" cries angry Mohtasim ;
"*Fe lasr ind' ilj min ulji,*"—
Trembling the newsman read to him
How in Ammoria, far from home,
An Arab girl of noble race
Was captive to a lord of Roum ;
And how he smote her on the face,

And how she cried, for life afraid,
"Ya, Mohtasim ! help, O my king !"
And how the Kafir mock'd the maid,
And laugh'd, and spake a bitter thing,
"Call louder, fool ! Mohtasim's ears
Are long as Barak's — if he heed —
Your prophet's ass ; and when he hears,
He'll come upon a spotted steed !"

The Caliph's face was stern and red,
He snapp'd the lid upon the cup ;
"Keep this same sherbet, slave," he said,
"Till such time as I drink it up.
Wallah ! the stream my drink shall be,
My hallow'd palm my only bowl,
Till I have set that lady free,
And seen that Roumi dog's head roll."

At dawn the drums of war were beat,
Proclaiming, "Thus saith Mohtasim,
'Let all my valiant horsemen meet,
And every soldier bring with him
A spotted steed.'" So rode they forth,
A sight of marvel and of fear ;

Pied horses prancing fiercely north,
  Three lakhs — the cup borne in the rear !

When to Ammoria he did win,
  He smote and drove the dogs of Roum,
And rode his spotted stallion in,
  Crying, "*Labbayki !* I am come ! "
Then downward from her prison-place
  Joyful the Arab lady crept ;
She held her hair before her face,
  She kiss'd his feet, she laugh'd and wept.

She pointed where that lord was laid :
  They drew him forth, he whin'd for grace :
Then with fierce eyes Mohtasim said —
  " She whom thou smotest on the face
Had scorn, because she call'd her king :
  Lo ! he is come ! and dost thou think
To live, who didst this bitter thing
  While Mohtasim at peace did drink ? "

Flash'd the fierce sword — roll'd the lord's head ;
  The wicked blood smok'd in the sand.
" Now bring my cup ! " the Caliph said.
  Lightly he took it in his hand, —
As down his throat the sweet drink ran
  Mohtasim in his saddle laugh'd,
And cried, " *Taiba asshrab alan !*
  By God ! delicious is this draught ! "

AFTER DEATH IN ARABIA

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort all his friends :

Faithful friends ! It lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow ;
And ye say, " Abdallah 's dead ! "
Weeping at the feet and head.
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers ;
Yet I smile and whisper this, —
" *I* am not the thing you kiss ;
Cease your tears, and let it lie ;
It *was* mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends ! What the women lave
For its last bed of the grave,
Is a tent which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a hawk my soul hath pass'd.
Love the inmate, not the room, —
The wearer, not the garb, — the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from these splendid stars.

Loving friends ! Be wise, and dry
Straightway every weeping eye, —
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'T is an empty sea-shell, — one
Out of which the pearl is gone ;
The shell is broken, it lies there ;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.
'T is an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah seal'd, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that lov'd him ; let it lie !
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in his store !

Allah glorious ! Allah good !
Now thy world is understood ;
Now the long, long wonder ends ;
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you ; lost, 't is true,
By such light as shines for you ;
But in light ye cannot see
Of unfulfill'd felicity, —
In enlarging paradise,
Lives a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends ! Yet not farewell ;
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepp'd
Ye will wonder why ye wept ;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain, —
Sunshine still must follow rain ;
Only not at death, — for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Be ye certain all seems love,
View'd from Allah's throne above ;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home !
La Allah illa Allah ! yea !
Thou love divine ! Thou love alway !

He that died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

RAGLAN

Ah! not because our Soldier died before
his field was won;
Ah! not because life would not last till
life's long task were done.
Wreathe one less leaf, grieve with less
grief, — of all our hosts that led
Not last in work and worth approv'd, —
Lord Raglan lieth dead.

His nobleness he had of none, War's Master
taught him war,
And prouder praise that Master gave than
meaner lips can mar;
Gone to his grave, his duty done; if farther
any seek,
He left his life to answer them, — a soldier's,
— let it speak!

'T was his to sway a blunted sword, — to
fight a fated field,
While idle tongues talk'd victory, to strug-
gle not to yield;
Light task for placeman's ready pen to plan
a field for fight,
Hard work and hot with steel and shot to
win that field aright.

Tears have been shed for the brave dead;
mourn him who mourn'd for all!
Praise hath been given for strife well striven;
praise him who strove o'er all,
Nor count that conquest little, though no
banner flaunt it far,
That under him our English hearts beat
Pain and Plague and War.

And if he held those English hearts too
good to pave the path
To idle victories, shall we grudge what
noble palm he hath?
Like ancient Chief he fought a-front, and
mid his soldiers seen,
His work was aye as stern as theirs; oh!
make his grave as green.

They know him well, — the Dead who died
that Russian wrong should cease,
Where Fortune doth not measure men, —
their souls and his have peace;
Ay! as well spent in sad sick tent as they
in bloody strife,
For English Homes our English Chief gave
what he had, — his life.

FROM "WITH SA'DI IN THE GARDEN"

MAHMUD AND AYAZ: A PARAPHRASE ON SA'DI

They mock'd the Sovereign of Ghaznîn:
one saith,
"Ayaz hath no great beauty, by my faith!
A Rose that 's neither rosy-red nor fra-
grant,
The Bulbul's love for such astonisheth!"

This went to Mahmud's ears; ill-pleas'd he
sate,
Bow'd on himself, reflecting; then to that
Replied: "My love is for his kindly
nature,
Not for his stature, nor his face, nor state!"

And I did hear how, in a rocky dell,
Bursting a chest of gems a camel fell;
King Mahmud wav'd his sleeve, permit-
ting plunder,
But spurr'd his own steed onward, as they
tell.

His horsemen parted from their Lord amain,
Eager for pearls, and corals, and such gain:
Of all those neck-exalting courtiers
None except Ayaz near him did remain.

The King look'd back — "How many hast
thou won,
Curl'd comfort of my heart?" He an-
swer'd "None!
I gallop'd up the pass in rear of thee;
I quit thee for no pearls beneath the sun!"

Oh, if to God thou hast propinquity,
For no wealth heedless of His service be!
If Lovers true of God shall ask from God
Aught except God, that 's infidelity.

If thine eyes fix on any gift of Friend,
Thy gain, not his, is thy desire's end:
If thy mouth gape in avarice, Heaven's
message
Unto Heart's ear by that road shall not wend.

SONG WITHOUT A SOUND

The Bulbul wail'd, "Oh, Rose! all night I
sing,
And Thou, Beloved! utterest not one
thing."

"Dear Bird!" she answer'd, "scent and blossoming
Are music of my Song without a sound."

The Cypress to the Tulip spake: "What bliss
Seest thou in sunshine, dancing still like this?"
"My cup," the Tulip said, "the wind's lips kiss;
Dancing I hear the Song without a sound."

The gray Owl hooted to the Dove at morn,
"Why art thou happy on thy jungle-thorn?"
"Hearest thou not," she cooed, "o'er Earth's face borne
This music of the Song without a sound?"

"Ah, Darweesh!" moan'd a King, "Vainly I pray
For Allah's comfort, kneeling day by day."
"Sultan!" quoth he, "be meek, and hear alway
The music of His Mercy without sound."

"Poet!" a Queen sigh'd, "why alone to thee
Come visions of that world we cannot see —
Not great nor rich?" "I borrow minstrelsy,"
Smiling he said, "from Songs without a sound."

Shirîn-i-man! dear Lover! true and sweet,
Ask no more if I love, nor kiss my feet;
But hear, with cheek against my bosom's beat,
The music of the Song without a sound!

THE MUSMEE

The Musmee has brown velvet eyes
Curtain'd with satin, sleepily;
You wonder if those lids would rise
The newest, strangest sight to see;
But when she chatters, laughs, or plays
Kôto, biwa, or samisen,
No jewel gleams with brighter rays
Than flash from those dark lashes then.

The Musmee has a small brown face,
"Musk-melon seed" its perfect shape:
Jetty arch'd eyebrows; nose to grace
The rosy mouth beneath; a nape,
And neck, and chin, and smooth, soft cheeks
Carv'd out of sun-burn'd ivory,
With teeth, which, when she smiles or speaks,
Pearl merchants might come leagues to see!

The Musmee's hair could teach the night
How to grow dark, the raven's wing
How to seem ebon! Grand the sight
When, in rich masses, towering,
She builds each high black-marble coil,
And binds the gold and scarlet in;
And thrusts, triumphant, through the toil
The Kanzâshi, her jewell'd pin.

The Musmee has wee, faultless feet,
With snow-white *tabi* trimly deck'd,
Which patter down the city street
In short steps, slow and circumspect;
A velvet string between her toes
Holds to its place th' unwilling shoe:
Pretty and pigeon-like she goes,
And on her head a hood of blue.

The Musmee wears a wondrous dress —
Kimono, obi, imoji —
A rose-bush in Spring loveliness
Is not more color-glad to see!
Her girdle holds her silver pipe,
And heavy swing her long silk sleeves
With cakes, love-letters, *mikan* ripe,
Small change, musk-bag, and writing-leaves.

The Musmee's heart is slow to grief,
And quick to pleasure, dance, and song;
The Musmee's pocket-handkerchief
A square of paper! All day long
Gentle, and sweet, and debonair
Is, rich or poor, this Asian lass:
Heaven have her in its tender care,
O medetó gozarimas![1]

[1] Japanese for "May it be well with thee!"

Stopford Augustus Brooke

VERSAILLES

(1784)

In Carnival we were, and supp'd that night
In a long room that overlook'd the Square,
When that strange matter happ'd of which you ask.
We rang all pleasure's carillon that week;
Feasts and rich shows, and hunting in the woods,
Light love that liv'd on change, deep drinking, mirth
As mad as Nero's on the Palatine;
The women were as wild as we, and, like
The King's, our money flew about in showers.
They said, "The people starv'd"; it could not be;
We spent a million on the Carnival.
And now for fifty years gone by I have heard
"The people starve" — Why then do the useless beasts
Gender so fast? Less mouths, more bread! For me,
I do not care whether they live or die, —
Canaille the dunghill breeds, — but Drummond car'd,
The young Scotch musketeer whose waking dream
You wish to hear from me, who only live
Of all our joyous company. I am old,
My life burns like the thinnest flame, but then
It was a glorious fire, and on that night
I led the feast, and roof and table rang
With revelry: till at the height of noise
A sudden silence fell, and while we smil'd,
Waiting for whom should break it, the great clock
Struck three in the still air — and a hush'd sound
Like coming wind pass'd by, and in its breath
I thought I heard, far off, a wail and roar
As if a city perish'd at one stroke;
The rest heard not, but Drummond starting up
And muttering — "Death, Death and his troops are nigh," —
Strode to the window. Half asleep he seem'd,
Pale as that madman Damiens on the day
He met the torture — and across the bar
He lean'd, and saw the white square in the moon.
Men mock'd, and let him be — they knew his mood;
One of his Highland trances, so they said;
But I kept watch — the grim gray North in him,
Midst of our Gallic lightness, pleas'd me well.
I watch'd and mark'd above his head the moon,
That shone like pearl amid the western heaven,
Suddenly swallow'd up by a vast cloud,
With edges like red lightning, but the rest
Of the sky and stars was clear, and the rushing noise
Now louder swell'd, like cataracts of rain.
And then I saw how Drummond toss'd his arms
High o'er his head, and, crying "Horror, horror,"
Fell like a stabb'd man prone upon the floor.
We laid him on a couch and cried, "Speak — speak,
What is it, what have you seen?"
"I have seen Death," he said,
"And Doom," — and truly with his matted hair,
And eyes which as he rose upon his hands
Seem'd 'neath their cavern'd arches coals of fire,
He look'd like a gaunt, shaggy mountain wolf
Caught in a pit, and mad with rage and fear.
"You heard," he said, "that sighing rush of wind
And then the awful cry, far off, as if
The world had groan'd and died — I heard, and trance
Fell on my brain, and in the trance I saw
The square below me in the moonlight fill
With nobles, dames, and maidens, pages, all
The mighty names of France, and midst them walk'd
The King and Queen, not ours, but those that come
Hereafter, and I heard soft speech of love

And laughter please the night — when momently
The moon went out, and from the darkness stream'd
A hissing flood of rain that where it fell
Changed into blood, and 'twixt the court-yard stones
Blood well'd as water from a mountain moss;
And the gay crowd, unwitting, walk'd in it:
Bubbling it rose past ankle, knee, and waist,
From waist to throat; and still they walk'd as if
They knew it not, until a fierce wind lash'd
The crimson sea, and beat it into waves,
And when its waves smote on their faces, then
They knew and shriek'd, but all in vain; the blood,
Storming upon them, whelm'd and drown'd them all;
At which a blinding lightning like a knife
Gash'd the cloud's breast, and dooming thunder peal'd.
I woke, and crying 'Horror' knew no more.
I've seen the fates of France; the day of God
And vengeance is at hand; take heed — repent —
Leave me to rest."
We laugh'd to hear him preach,
And left him on the couch, where like a man
Drunken he slept, but when he rose, his hue
Was changed, a cloud was on his eyes, his mouth
Was stern. He sang, he ruffled, lov'd no more,
Provok'd no man, and went about like one
Who — can you think it? — thought there was a God
Who, midst his court, car'd how his people liv'd.
We all were doom'd, he said, and France was doom'd,
He would not stay! And so gave up his sword,
And went to Scotland, where in some grim tower
He lov'd and married — fool! — a nameless girl,
And made the peasants happy, I am told;
But we liv'd out our life, and met no doom;
And now I am old, and Louis, my good friend
The Well-belov'd, is dead long since, and soon
My time will come! — The people starve, they say,
And curse. I know they curse and hate us! Well,
We will ride down and slay the mutinous dogs;
Why, yesterday my horses in the crowd
Threw down a mother and a child, and splash'd
A hideous dwarf, who shook his fist and curs'd;
I laugh'd, but as he curs'd with skill, I ask'd
The ruffian's name — "Marat," they said, "a leech,
Who physics horses and the common herd,
Brute healing brute — the people's friend, and yet
He takes our wages — writes us down, but keeps
A place in d'Artois' stable!" These are the scum
That Drummond fear'd — Artois shall flog the man.

THE JUNGFRAU'S CRY

I, Virgin of the Snows, have liv'd
Uncounted years apart;
Mated with Sunlight, Stars and Heaven,
But I am cold at heart.

High mates! Ye teach me purity,
And lonely thought and truth;
But I have never liv'd, and yet
I have eternal youth.

Blow, tropic winds, and warm rains, fall,
And melt my snowy crest;
Let soft woods clothe my shoulders fair,
Deep grass lie on my breast.

And let me feed a thousand herds,
And hear the tinkling bells,
Till the brown châlets cluster close
In all my stream-fed dells.

So may I hear the sweep of scythes,
And beating of the flails,

My maidens singing as they spin,
And the voice of nightingales.

And little children in their joy,
And, where my violets hide,
Soft interchange of lovers' vows,
Sweet hymns at eventide.

Alas! cold Sunlight, Stars and Heaven,
My high companions, call.
The ice-clad life is pure and stern:
I am weary of it all.

SONGS FROM "RIQUET OF THE TUFT"

QUEEN'S SONG

Young Sir Guyon proudly said,
"Love shall never be my fate."
"None can say so but the dead,"
Shriek'd the witch wife at his gate.

"Go and dare my shadow'd dell,
Love will quell your happy mood."
Guyon, laughing his farewell,
Rode into the faery wood.

There he met a maiden wild,
By a tree she stood alone;
When she look'd at him and smil'd,
At a breath his heart was gone.

In her arms she twin'd him fast,
And, like wax within the flame,
Melted memory of the past,
Soul and body, name and fame.

Late at night the steed came back,
"Where 's our good knight?" cried his men;
Far and near they sought his track,
But Guyon no one saw again.

PRINCE RIQUET'S SONG

O long ago, when Faery-land
Arose new born, King Oberon
Walk'd pensive on the yellow strand,
And wearied, for he liv'd alone.

"Why have I none, he said, to love?"
When soft a wind began to fleet
Across the moonlit sea, and drove
A lonely shallop to his feet.

Of pearl, and rubies red, and gold,
That shell was made, and in it lay
Titania fast asleep, and roll'd
In roses, and in flowers of May.

He wak'd her with a loving kiss,
Her arms around him softly clung;
And none can ever tell the bliss
These had when Faery-land was young.

John Nichol

MARE MEDITERRANEUM

A line of light! it is the inland sea,
The least in compass and the first in fame;
The gleaming of its waves recalls to me
Full many an ancient name.

As through my dreamland float the days of old,
The forms and features of their heroes shine:
I see Phœnician sailors bearing gold
From the Tartessian mine.

Seeking new worlds, storm-toss'd Ulysses ploughs
Remoter surges of the winding main;
And Grecian captains come to pay their vows,
Or gather up the slain.

I see the temples of the Violet Crown
Burn upward in the hour of glorious flight;
And mariners of uneclips'd renown,
Who won the great sea fight.

I hear the dashing of a thousand oars,
The angry waters take a deeper dye;
A thousand echoes vibrate from the shores
With Athens' battle-cry.

Again the Carthaginian rovers sweep,
With sword and commerce, on from shore to shore;

In visionary storms the breakers leap
Round Syrtes, as of yore.

Victory, sitting on the Seven Hills,
Had gain'd the world when she had master'd thee ;
Thy bosom with the Roman war-note thrills,
Wave of the inland sea.

Then, singing as they sail in shining ships,
I see the monarch minstrels of Romance,
And hear their praises murmur'd through the lips
Of the fair dames of France.

Across the deep another music swells,
On Adrian bays a later splendor smiles ;
Power hails the marble city where she dwells
Queen of a hundred isles.

Westward the galleys of the Crescent roam,
And meet the Pisan ; challenge on the breeze,
Till the long Dorian palace lords the foam
With stalwart Genoese.

But the light fades ; the vision wears away ;
I see the mist above the dreary wave.
Blow, winds of Freedom, give another day
Of glory to the brave !

H. W. L.

The roar of Niagara dies away,
The fever heats of war and traffic fade,
While the soft twilight melts the glare of day
In this new Helicon, the Muses' glade.

The roof that shelter'd Washington's retreat,
Thy home of homes, America, I find
In this memorial mansion, where we greet
The full-ton'd lyrist, with the gentle mind.

Here have thy chosen spirits met and flower'd,
Season on season, 'neath magnetic spells
Of him who, in his refuge, rose-embower'd,
Remote from touch of envious passion dwells.

Here Concord's sage and Harvard's wit contend :
The wise, the true, the learned of the land,
Grave thoughts, gay fantasies together blend
In subtle converse, 'neath his fostering hand.

With other forms than those of mortal guest
The house is haunted ; visions of the morn,
Voices of night that soothe the soul to rest,
Attend the shapes, by aery wand reborn ;

Serene companions of a vanish'd age,
Noiseless they tread the once familiar floors ;
Or, later offspring of the poet's page,
They throng the threshold, crowd the corridors.

"Sweet Preciosa" beside the listening stair
Flutters expectant while Victorian sings ;
Evangeline, with cloistral eyes of prayer,
Folds her white hands, in shade of angels' wings.

Conquistadors of Castile pace the hall ;
Or red-skinn'd warriors pass the challenge round ;
Or Minnehaha's laughter, as the fall
Of woodland waters, makes a silver sound.

Thor rolls the thunders of his fiery vaunt,
The answering battle burns in Olaf's eyes ;
Or love-crown'd Elsie lures us with the chaunt
That lull'd the waves, 'neath star-hung Genoan skies.

Here grim-faced captains of colonial days
Salute the builders of old German rhyme ;
And choral troops of children hymn the praise
Of their own master minstrel of all time.

Fair shrine of pure creations ! linger long
His bright example, may his fame increase :
Discord nor distance ever dim his song,
Whose ways are pleasantness, whose paths are peace.

Nor Hawthorne's manse, with ancient moss bespread,
Nor Irving's hollow, is with rest so rife
As this calm haven, where the leaves are shed
Round Indian summers of a golden life.

Francis, Earl of Rosslyn

BEDTIME

'Tis bedtime; say your hymn, and bid "Good-night;
God bless Mamma, Papa, and dear ones all."
Your half-shut eyes beneath your eyelids fall,
Another minute, you will shut them quite.
Yes, I will carry you, put out the light,
And tuck you up, although you are so tall!
What will you give me, sleepy one, and call
My wages, if I settle you all right?
I laid her golden curls upon my arm,
I drew her little feet within my hand,
Her rosy palms were joined in trustful bliss,
Her heart next mine beat gently, soft and warm
She nestled to me, and, by Love's command,
Paid me my precious wages—"Baby's Kiss."

MEMORY

I still keep open Memory's chamber: still
Drink from the fount of Youth's perennial stream.
It may be in old age an idle dream
Of those dear children; but beyond my will
They come again, and dead affections thrill
My pulseless heart, for now once more they seem
To be alive, and wayward fancies teem
In my fond brain, and all my senses fill.
Come, Alice, leave your books; 't is I who call;
Bind up your hair, and teasing—did you say
Kissing—that kitten? Evey, come with me;
Mary, grave darling, take my hand: yes, all!
I have three hands to-day! A Holiday.
A Holiday, Papa? Woe 's me! 't is Memory!

Sir Lewis Morris

AT LAST

Let me at last be laid
On that hillside I know which scans the vale,
Beneath the thick yews' shade,
For shelter when the rains and winds prevail.
It cannot be the eye
Is blinded when we die,
So that we know no more at all
The dawns increase, the evenings fall;
Shut up within a mouldering chest of wood
Asleep, and careless of our children's good.

Shall I not feel the spring,
The yearly resurrection of the earth,
Stir thro' each sleeping thing
With the fair throbbings and alarms of birth,
Calling at its own hour
On folded leaf and flower,
Calling the lamb, the lark, the bee,
Calling the crocus and anemone,
Calling new lustre to the maiden's eye,
And to the youth love and ambition high?

Shall I no more admire
The winding river kiss the daisied plain?
Nor see the dawn's cold fire
Steal downward from the rosy hills again?
Nor watch the frowning cloud,
Sublime with mutterings loud,
Burst on the vale, nor eves of gold,
Nor crescent moons, nor starlights cold,
Nor the red casements glimmer on the hill
At Yule-tides, when the frozen leas are still?

Or should my children's tread
Through Sabbath twilights, when the hymns are done,
Come softly overhead,
Shall no sweet quickening through my bosom run,
Till all my soul exale
Into the primrose pale,
And every flower which springs above
Breathes a new perfume from my love;
And I shall throb, and stir, and thrill beneath
With a pure passion stronger far than death?

Sweet thought! fair, gracious dream,
Too fair and fleeting for our clearer view!
How should our reason deem
That those dear souls, who sleep beneath the blue
In rayless caverns dim,
'Mid ocean monsters grim,
Or whitening on the trackless sand,
Or with strange corpses on each hand
In battle-trench or city graveyard lie,
Break not their prison-bonds till time shall die?

Nay, 't is not so indeed:
With the last fluttering of the falling breath
The clay-cold form doth breed
A viewless essence, far too fine for death;
And, ere one voice can mourn,
On upward pinions borne,
They are hidden, they are hidden, in some thin air,
Far from corruption, far from care,
Where through a veil they view their former scene,
Only a little touch'd by what has been.

Touch'd but a little; and yet,
Conscious of every change that doth befall,
By constant change beset,
The creatures of this tiny whirling ball,
Fill'd with a higher being,
Dower'd with a clearer seeing,
Risen to a vaster scheme of life,
To wider joys and nobler strife,
Viewing our little human hopes and fears
As we our children's fleeting smiles and tears.

Then, whether with fire they burn
This dwelling-house of mine when I am fled,
And in a marble urn
My ashes rest by my beloved dead,
Or in the sweet cold earth
I pass from death to birth,
And pay kind Nature's life-long debt
In heart's-ease and in violet—
In charnel-yard or hidden ocean wave,
Where'er I lie, I shall not scorn my grave.

SONG

Love took my life and thrill'd it
Through all its strings,
Play'd round my mind and fill'd it
With sound of wings,
But to my heart he never came
To touch it with his golden flame.

Therefore it is that singing
I do rejoice,
Nor heed the slow years bringing
A harsher voice,
Because the songs which he has sung
Still leave the untouch'd singer young.

But whom in fuller fashion
The Master sways,
For him, swift wing'd with passion,
Fleet the brief days.
Betimes the enforced accents come,
And leave him ever after dumb.

ON A THRUSH SINGING IN AUTUMN

Sweet singer of the Spring, when the new world
Was fill'd with song and bloom, and the fresh year
Tripp'd, like a lamb playful and void of fear,
Through daisied grass and young leaves scarce unfurl'd,
Where is thy liquid voice
That all day would rejoice?
Where now thy sweet and homely call,
Which from gray dawn to evening's chilling fall
Would echo from thin copse and tassell'd brake,
For homely duty tun'd and love's sweet sake?

The spring-tide pass'd, high summer soon should come.
The woods grew thick, the meads a deeper hue ;
The pipy summer growths swell'd, lush and tall ;
The sharp scythes swept at daybreak through the dew.
Thou didst not heed at all,
Thy prodigal voice grew dumb ;
No more with song mightst thou beguile,
She sitting on her speckled eggs the while,
Thy mate's long vigil as the slow days went,
Solacing her with lays of measureless content.

Nay, nay, thy voice was Duty's, nor would dare
Sing were Love fled, though still the world were fair ;
The summer wax'd and wan'd, the nights grew cold,
The sheep were thick within the wattled fold,
The woods began to moan,
Dumb wert thou and alone ;
Yet now, when leaves are sere, thy ancient note
Comes low and halting from thy doubtful throat.

Oh, lonely loveless voice, what dost thou here
In the deep silence of the fading year ?

Thus do I read answer of thy song :
"I sang when winds blew chilly all day long ;
I sang because hope came and joy was near,
I sang a little while, I made good cheer ;
In summer's cloudless day
My music died away ;
But now the hope and glory of the year
Are dead and gone, a little while I sing
Songs of regret for days no longer here,
And touch'd with presage of the far-off Spring."

Is this the meaning of thy note, fair bird ?
Or do we read into thy simple brain
Echoes of thoughts which human hearts have stirr'd,
High-soaring joy and melancholy pain ?
Nay, nay, that lingering note
Belated from thy throat —
"Regret," is what it sings, "regret, regret !
The dear days pass, but are not wholly gone.
In praise of those I let my song go on ;
'T is sweeter to remember than forget."

Philip Gilbert Hamerton

THE SANYASSI

"I HAVE subdued at last the will to live,
Expelling nature from my weary heart ;
And now my life, so calm, contemplative,
No longer selfish, freely may depart.
The vital flame is burning less and less ;
And memory fuses to forgetfulness.

"Sometimes I gaze on vacancy so long
That all my brain grows vacant, and I feel
That wondrous influence which doth make me strong
In resolution and unworldly zeal,
Until, abstracted from all time and sense,
I sink into eternal indolence.

"And now I feel my inward life grow still,
A being by itself, which fondly clings
To consciousness which I can never kill,
Yet is abstracted from all outward things,
And slumbers often, and is overgrown ;
The sense of self increases when alone.

"I have subdued the will, but gain'd the power
To dwell among the denizens of earth ;
I spread my spirit over tree and flower,
And human hearts, and things of meaner birth ;
And thinking thus to give my soul away,
I found it grew more conscious every day.

"The simple crowds who hourly pass me by,
I think have lately grown afraid of me ;
There is some virtue in this sunken eye,
For sometimes in my dreams I faintly see
The workings of the spirit in the brain,
And living floods that gush in every vein.

"Now, as I am weary of this vain endeavor
To lift my spirit to eternal sleep;
I seek the marble stairs, the sacred river,
The liquid graves below, where, calm and deep,
Beneath where that bright, silent water flows,
Stretch wide the regions of divine repose."

With thoughts like these the Indian suicide
Dragg'd forth his stiffen'd limbs from his old lair;
He had no garment on his shrivell'd hide,
He shunn'd the grove, and sought the solar glare,
He never look'd aside, and his dead march
Had for its goal a gate of one proud arch.

It rose in sculptur'd splendor on the view
From the surrounding foliage of dark green,
Whose masses of broad shadow did subdue
Its prominent light. The blue sky shone between.
A crowd was on the river's sacred marge,
And on the Ganges many a gaudy barge.

Down to that river he descended now;
And as he press'd the last steps of the stair,
A glance of pleasure from beneath his brow
Fell on two jars of porous earthenware.
He seiz'd them with his feeble hands, and tied
One of them to his girdle on each side,

And floated slowly from the crowded Ghaut;
And since no friendly hand was stretch'd to save,
Found in those quiet waters what he sought —
A long rest and an honorable grave.
His faith was righteous, and his ending blest;
And now his soul enjoys eternal rest.

THE WILD HUNTSMEN

"Wild huntsmen?" — 'T was a flight of swans,
But so invisibly they flew,
That in his mind the pallid hind
Could hear a bugle horn.
Faintly sounds the airy note,
And the deepest bay from the staghound's throat
Like the yelp of a cur on the air doth float;
And hardly heard is the wild halloo
On the straggling night-breeze borne!

They fly on the blast of the forest
That whistles round the wither'd tree,
But where they go we may not know,
Nor see them as they fly.
With hound and horn they ride away
In the dreary twilight cold and gray,
That hovers near the dying day;
And the peasant hears but cannot see
Those huntsmen pass him by.

Hark! 't is the goblin of the wood,
Rushing down the dark hill-side;
With steeds that neigh and hounds that bay,
All viewless sweeps the throng.
And heavily where the fallow-deer feeds
Clatter the hoofs of their hunting steeds,
Like the mountain gale on the valley's meads;
Till far away the spectres ride,
In distant lands along.

Goden Noel

THE SECRET OF THE NIGHTINGALE

The ground I walk'd on felt like air,
Air buoyant with the year's young mirth;
Far, filmy, undulating fair,
The down lay, a long wave of earth;
And a still green foam of woods rose high
Over the hill-line into the sky.

In meadowy pasture browse the kine,
Thin wheat-blades color a brown plough-line;
Fresh rapture of the year's young joy
Was in the unfolded luminous leaf,
And birds that shower as they toy
Melodious rain that knows not grief,
A song-maze where my heart in bliss
Lay folded, like a chrysalis.

They allur'd my feet far into the wood,
Down a winding glade with leaflets wall'd,
With an odorous dewy dark imbued ;
Rose, and maple, and hazel call'd
Me into the shadowy solitude ;
Wild blue germander eyes enthrall'd
Made me free of the balmy bowers,
Where a wonderful garden-party of flowers,
Laughing sisterhood under the trees,
Dancing merrily, play'd with the bees ;
Anemone, starwort, bands in white,
Like girls for a first communion dight,
And pale yellow primrose ere her flight,
Usher'd me onward wondering
To a scene more fair than the court of a king.
Ah ! they were very fair themselves,
Sweet maids of honor, woodland elves !
Frail flowers that arrive with the cuckoo,
Pale lilac, hyacinth purple of hue,
And the little pink geranium,
All smil'd and nodded to see me come ;
All gave me welcome ; "No noise," they said,
"For we will show you the bridal bed,
Where Philomel, our queen, was wed ;
Hush ! move with a tender, reverent foot,
Like a shy light over bole and root ;"
And they blew in the delicate air for flute.

Into the heart of the verdure stole
My feet, and a music enwound my soul ;
Zephyr flew over a cool bare brow —
I am near, very near to the secret now !
For the rose-covers, all alive with song,
Flash with it, plain now low and long ;
Sprinkle a holy water of notes ;
On clear air melody leans and floats ;
The blithe-wing'd minstrel merrily moves,
Dim bushes burn with mystical loves !

Lo ! I arrive ! immers'd in green,
Where the wood divides, though barely seen,
A nest in one of the blue leaf-rifts !
There over the border a bird uplifts
Her downy head, bill'd, luminous-ey'd ;
Behold the chosen one, the bride !
And the singer, he singeth by her side.
Leap, heart ! be aflame with them ! loud, not dumb,
Give a voice to their epithalamium !
Whose raptures wax not pale nor dim
Beside the fires of seraphim.
These are glorious, glowing stairs,
In gradual ascent to theirs ;
With human loves acclaim and hail
The holy lore of the nightingale !

SEA SLUMBER-SONG

Sea-birds are asleep,
The world forgets to weep,
Sea murmurs her soft slumber-song
On the shadowy sand
Of this elfin land ;
"I, the Mother mild,
Hush thee, O my child,
Forget the voices wild !
Isles in elfin light
Dream, the rocks and caves,
Lull'd by whispering waves,
Veil their marbles bright,
Foam glimmers faintly white
Upon the shelly sand
Of this elfin land ;
Sea-sound, like violins,
To slumber woos and wins,
I murmur my soft slumber-song,
Leave woes, and wails, and sins,
Ocean's shadowy might
Breathes good-night,
Good-night !"

DYING

They are waiting on the shore
For the bark to take them home ;
They will toil and grieve no more ;
The hour for release hath come.

All their long life lies behind,
Like a dimly blending dream ;
There is nothing left to bind
To the realms that only seem.

They are waiting for the boat,
There is nothing left to do ;
What was near them grows remote,
Happy silence falls like dew ;
Now the shadowy bark is come,
And the weary may go home.

By still water they would rest,
In the shadow of the tree ;
After battle sleep is best,
After noise tranquillity.

THE MERRY-GO-ROUND

THE merry-go-round, the merry-go-round,
the merry-go-round at Fowey!
They whirl around, they gallop around, man,
woman, and girl, and boy;
They circle on wooden horses, white, black,
brown, and bay,
To a loud monotonous tune that hath a
trumpet bray.
All is dark where the circus stands on the
narrow quay,
Save for its own yellow lamps, that illumine
it brilliantly:
Painted purple and red, it pours a broad
strong glow
Over an old-world house, with a pillar'd
place below;
For the floor of the building rests on bandy
columns small,
And the bulging pile may, tottering, sud-
denly bury all.
But there upon wooden benches, hunch'd
in the summer night,
Sit wrinkled sires of the village arow, whose
hair is white;
They sit like the mummies of men, with a
glare upon them cast
From a rushing flame of the living, like
their own mad past;
They are watching the merry-make, and
their face is very grave;
Over all are the silent stars! beyond, the
cold gray wave.
And while I gaze on the galloping horses
circling round,
The men caracoling up and down to a weird,
monotonous sound,
I pass into a bewilderment, and marvel why
they go;
It seems the earth revolving, with our vain
to and fro!
For the young may be glad and eager, but
some ride listlessly,
And the old look on with a weary, dull,
and lifeless eye;
I know that in an hour the fair will all be
gone,
Stars shining over a dreary void, the Deep
have sound alone.
I gaze with orb suffus'd at human things
that fly,
And I am lost in the wonder of our dim
destiny. . . .
The merry-go-round, the merry-go-round,
the merry-go-round at Fowey!
They whirl around, they gallop around, man,
woman, and girl, and boy.

LAMENT

I AM lying in the tomb, love,
Lying in the tomb,
Tho' I move within the gloom, love,
Breathe within the gloom!
Men deem life not fled, dear,
Deem my life not fled,
Tho' I with thee am dead, dear,
I with thee am dead,
O my little child!

What is the gray world, darling,
What is the gray world,
Where the worm lies curl'd, darling,
The deathworm lies curl'd?
They tell me of the spring, dear!
Do I want the spring?
Will she waft upon her wing, dear,
The joy-pulse of her wing,
Thy songs, thy blossoming,
O my little child!

For the hallowing of thy smile, love,
The rainbow of thy smile,
Gleaming for a while, love,
Gleaming to beguile,
Replunged me in the cold, dear,
Leaves me in the cold.
And I feel so very old, dear,
Very, very old!

Would they put me out of pain, dear,
Out of all my pain,
Since I may not live again, dear,
Never live again!

I am lying in the grave, love,
In thy little grave,
Yet I hear the wind rave, love,
And the wild wave!
I would lie asleep, darling,
With thee lie asleep,
Unhearing the world weep, darling,
Little children weep!
O my little child!

THE TOY CROSS

My little boy at Christmas-tide
  Made me a toy cross ;
Two sticks he did, in boyish pride,
  With brazen nail emboss.

Ah me ! how soon, on either side
  His dying bed's true cross,
She and I were crucified,
  Bemoaning our life-loss !

But He, whose arms in death spread wide
  Upon the holy tree,
Were clasp'd about him when he died —
  Clasp'd for eternity !

"THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE"

Whene'er there comes a little child,
My darling comes with him ;
Whene'er I hear a birdie wild
Who sings his merry whim,
Mine sings with him :
If a low strain of music sails
Among melodious hills and dales,
When a white lamb or kitten leaps,
Or star, or vernal flower peeps,
When rainbow dews are pulsing joy,
Or sunny waves, or leaflets toy,
Then he who sleeps
Softly wakes within my heart ;
With a kiss from him I start ;
He lays his head upon my breast,
Tho' I may not see my guest,
Dear bosom-guest !
In all that 's pure and fair and good,
I feel the spring-time of thy blood,
Hear thy whisper'd accents flow
To lighten woe,
Feel them blend,
Although I fail to comprehend.
And if one woundeth with harsh word,
Or deed, a child, or beast, or bird,
It seems to strike weak Innocence
Through him, who hath for his defence
Thunder of the All-loving Sire,
And mine, to whom He gave the fire.

Sir Alfred Lyall

MEDITATIONS OF A HINDU PRINCE

All the world over, I wonder, in lands that I never have trod,
Are the people eternally seeking for the signs and steps of a God ?
Westward across the ocean, and Northward across the snow,
Do they all stand gazing, as ever, and what do the wisest know ?

Here, in this mystical India, the deities hover and swarm
Like the wild bees heard in the tree-tops, or the gusts of a gathering storm ;
In the air men hear their voices, their feet on the rocks are seen,
Yet we all say, "Whence is the message, and what may the wonders mean ?"

A million shrines stand open, and ever the censer swings,
As they bow to a mystic symbol, or the figures of ancient kings ;
And the incense rises ever, and rises the endless cry
Of those who are heavy laden, and of cowards loth to die.

For the Destiny drives us together, like deer in a pass of the hills ;
Above is the sky, and around us the sound of the shot that kills ;
Push'd by a power we see not, and struck by a hand unknown,
We pray to the trees for shelter, and press our lips to a stone.

The trees wave a shadowy answer, and the rock frowns hollow and grim,
And the form and the nod of the demon are caught in the twilight dim ;
And we look to the sunlight falling afar on the mountain crest, —
Is there never a path runs upward to a refuge there and a rest ?

The path, ah! who has shown it, and which
is the faithful guide?
The haven, ah! who has known it? for
steep is the mountain side,
Forever the shot strikes surely, and ever
the wasted breath
Of the praying multitude rises, whose answer is only death.

Here are the tombs of my kinsfolk, the
fruit of an ancient name,
Chiefs who were slain on the war-field, and
women who died in flame;
They are gods, these kings of the foretime,
they are spirits who guard our race:
Ever I watch and worship; they sit with a
marble face.

And the myriad idols around me, and the
legion of muttering priests,
The revels and rites unholy, the dark unspeakable feasts!
What have they wrung from the Silence?
Hath even a whisper come
Of the secret, Whence and Whither?
Alas! for the gods are dumb.

Shall I list to the word of English, who
come from the uttermost sea?
"The Secret, hath it been told you, and
what is your message to me?"

It is nought but the wide-world story how
the earth and the heavens began,
How the gods are glad and angry, and a
Deity once was man.

I had thought, "Perchance in the cities
where the rulers of India dwell,
Whose orders flash from the far land, who
girdle the earth with a spell,
They have fathom'd the depths we float on,
or measur'd the unknown main—"
Sadly they turn from the venture, and say
that the quest is vain.

Is life, then, a dream and delusion, and
where shall the dreamer awake?
Is the world seen like shadows on water, and
what if the mirror break?
Shall it pass as a camp that is struck, as a
tent that is gathered and gone
From the sands that were lamp-lit at eve,
and at morning are level and lone?

Is there nought in the heaven above, whence
the hail and the levin are hurl'd,
But the wind that is swept around us by the
rush of the rolling world?
The wind that shall scatter my ashes, and
bear me to silence and sleep
With the dirge, and the sounds of lamenting,
and voices of women who weep.

Alfred Austin

AT HIS GRAVE

HUGHENDEN, MAY, 1881

LEAVE me a little while alone,
Here at his grave that still is strown
With crumbling flower and wreath;
The laughing rivulet leaps and falls,
The thrush exults, the cuckoo calls,
And he lies hush'd beneath.

With myrtle cross and crown of rose,
And every lowlier flower that blows,
His new-made couch is dress'd;
Primrose and cowslip, hyacinth wild,
Gather'd by monarch, peasant, child,
A nation's grief attest.

I stood not with the mournful crowd
That hither came when round his shroud
Pious farewells were said.

In the fam'd city that he sav'd,
By minaret crown'd, by billow lav'd,
I heard that he was dead.

Now o'er his tomb at last I bend,
No greeting get, no greeting tend,
Who never came before
Unto his presence, but I took,
From word or gesture, tone or look,
Some wisdom from his door.

And must I now unanswer'd wait,
And, though a suppliant at the gate,
No sound my ears rejoice?
Listen! Yes, even as I stand,
I feel the pressure of his hand,
The comfort of his voice.

How poor were Fame, did grief confess
That death can make a great life less,
Or end the help it gave !
Our wreaths may fade, our flowers may wane,
But his well-ripen'd deeds remain,
Untouch'd, above his grave.

Let this, too, soothe our widow'd minds ;
Silenced are the opprobrious winds
Whene'er the sun goes down ;
And free henceforth from noonday noise,
He at a tranquil height enjoys
The starlight of renown.

Thus hence we something more may take
Than sterile grief, than formless ache,
Or vainly utter'd vow ;
Death hath bestow'd what life withheld
And he round whom detraction swell'd
Hath peace with honor now.

The open jeer, the covert taunt,
The falsehood coin'd in factious haunt,
These loving gifts reprove.
They never were but thwarted sound
Of ebbing waves that bluster round
A rock that will not move.

And now the idle roar rolls off,
Hush'd is the gibe and sham'd the scoff,
Repress'd the envious gird ;
Since death, the looking-glass of life,
Clear'd of the misty breath of strife,
Reflects his face unblurr'd.

From callow youth to mellow age,
Men turn the leaf and scan the page,
And note, with smart of loss,
How wit to wisdom did mature,
How duty burn'd ambition pure,
And purged away the dross.

Youth is self-love ; our manhood lends
Its heart to pleasure, mistress, friends,
So that when age steals nigh,
How few find any worthier aim
Than to protract a flickering flame,
Whose oil hath long run dry !

But he, unwitting youth once flown,
With England's greatness link'd his own,
And, steadfast to that part,
Held praise and blame but fitful sound,
And in the love of country found
Full solace for his heart.

Now in an English grave he lies :
With flowers that tell of English skies
And mind of English air,
A grateful sovereign decks his bed,
And hither long with pilgrim tread
Will English feet repair.

Yet not beside his grave alone
We seek the glance, the touch, the tone ;
His home is nigh, — but there,
See from the hearth his figure fled,
The pen unrais'd, the page unread,
Untenanted the chair !

Vainly the beechen boughs have made
A fresh green canopy of shade,
Vainly the peacocks stray ;
While Carlo, with despondent gait,
Wonders how long affairs of State
Will keep his lord away.

Here most we miss the guide, the friend ;
Back to the churchyard let me wend,
And, by the posied mound,
Lingering where late stood worthier feet,
Wish that some voice, more strong, more sweet,
A loftier dirge would sound.

At least I bring not tardy flowers :
Votive to him life's budding powers,
Such as they were, I gave —
He not rejecting, so I may
Perhaps these poor faint spices lay,
Unchidden, on his grave !

SONGS FROM "PRINCE LUCIFER"

GRAVE-DIGGER'S SONG

The crab, the bullace, and the sloe,
They burgeon in the Spring ;
And, when the west wind melts the snow,
The redstarts build and sing.
But Death's at work in rind and root,
And loves the green buds best ;
And when the pairing music 's mute,
He spares the empty nest.
Death ! Death !
Death is master of lord and clown.
Close the coffin, and hammer it down.

When nuts are brown and sere without,
And white and plump within,
And juicy gourds are pass'd about,
And trickle down the chin ;

When comes the reaper with his scythe,
And reaps and nothing leaves,
Oh, then it is that Death is blithe,
And sups among the sheaves.
Death! Death!
Lower the coffin and slip the cord:
Death is master of clown and lord.

When logs about the house are stack'd,
And next year's hose is knit,
And tales are told and jokes are crack'd,
And faggots blaze and spit;
Death sits down in the ingle-nook,
Sits down and doth not speak:
But he puts his arm round the maid that 's warm,
And she tingles in the cheek.
Death! Death!
Death is master of lord and clown;
Shovel the clay in, tread it down.

MOTHER-SONG

White little hands!
Pink little feet!
Dimpled all over,
Sweet, sweet, sweet!
What dost thou wail for?
The unknown? the unseen?
The ills that are coming,
The joys that have been?

Cling to me closer,
Closer and closer,
Till the pain that is purer
Hath banish'd the grosser.
Drain, drain at the stream, love,
Thy hunger is freeing,
That was born in a dream, love,
Along with thy being!

Little fingers that feel
For their home on my breast,
Little lips that appeal
For their nurture, their rest!
Why, why dost thou weep, dear?
Nay, stifle thy cries,
Till the dew of thy sleep, dear,
Lies soft on thine eyes.

AGATHA

She wanders in the April woods,
That glisten with the fallen shower;
She leans her face against the buds,
She stops, she stoops, she plucks a flower.
She feels the ferment of the hour:
She broodeth when the ringdove broods;
The sun and flying clouds have power
Upon her cheek and changing moods.
She cannot think she is alone,
As o'er her senses warmly steal
Floods of unrest she fears to own,
And almost dreads to feel.

Among the summer woodlands wide
Anew she roams, no more alone;
The joy she fear'd is at her side,
Spring's blushing secret now is known.
The primrose and its mates have flown,
The thrush's ringing note hath died;
But glancing eye and glowing tone
Fall on her from her god, her guide.
She knows not, asks not, what the goal,
She only feels she moves towards bliss,
And yields her pure unquestioning soul
To touch and fondling kiss.

And still she haunts those woodland ways,
Though all fond fancy finds there now
To mind of spring or summer days,
Are sodden trunk and songless bough.
The past sits widow'd on her brow,
Homeward she wends with wintry gaze,
To walls that house a hollow vow,
To hearth where love hath ceas'd to blaze:
Watches the clammy twilight wane,
With grief too fix'd for woe or tear;
And, with her forehead 'gainst the pane,
Envies the dying year.

THE HAYMAKERS' SONG

Here 's to him that grows it,
Drink, lads, drink!
That lays it in and mows it,
Clink, jugs, clink!
To him that mows and makes it,
That scatters it and shakes it,
That turns, and teds, and rakes it,
Clink, jugs, clink!

Now here 's to him that stacks it,
Drink, lads, drink!
That thrashes and that tacks it,
Clink, jugs, clink!
That cuts it out for eating,
When March-dropp'd lambs are bleating,
And the slate-blue clouds are sleeting,
Drink, lads, drink!

And here 's to thane and yeoman,
Drink, lads, drink !
To horseman and to bowman,
Clink, jugs, clink !

To lofty and to low man,
Who bears a grudge to no man,
But flinches from no foeman,
Drink, lads, drink !

Thomas Ashe

MARIAN

Passing feet pause, as they pass,
By this little slab of slate.
People, if they go this way,
By the linchen'd wicket gate,
At each other look and say,
"Pity, pity ! sad it was !"
Here have fallen as many tears
As the months in her short years.

Seven and ten brief sunny springs ;
Scarce so many winter snows :
Here the little speedwell keeps
Watch beside the pale dog-rose ;
On this hillock, while she sleeps
Underneath, the red-breast sings.
Wedded on an April day !
In the Autumn laid away !

PHANTOMS

My days are full of pleasant memories
Of all those women sweet,
Whom I have known ! How tenderly their eyes
Flash thro' the days — too fleet ! —
Which long ago went by with sun and rain,
Flowers, or the winter snow ;
And still thro' memory's palace-halls are fain
In rustling robes to go !
Or wed, or widow'd, or with milkless breasts,
Around those women stand,
Like mists that linger on the mountain crests
Rear'd in a phantom land ;
And love is in their mien and in their look,
And from their lips a stream
Of tender words flows, smooth as any brook,
And softer than a dream :
And, one by one, holding my hands, they say
Things of the years agone ;
And each head will a little turn away,
And each one still sigh on ;
Because they think such meagre joy we had ;
For love was little bold,
And youth had store, and chances to be glad,
And squander'd so his gold.
Blue eyes, and gray, and blacker than the sloe,
And dusk and golden hair,
And lips that broke in kisses long ago,
Like sun-kiss'd flowers, are there ;
And warm fire-side, and sunny orchard wall,
And river-brink and bower,
And wood and hill, and morning and day-fall,
And every place and hour !
And each on each a white unclouded brow
Still as a sister bends,
As they would say, "love makes us kindred now,
Who sometime were his friends."

BY THE SALPÉTRIÈRE

I saw a poor old woman on the bench
That you may find by the Salpétrière.
The yellow leaves were falling, and the wind
Gave hint of bitter days to come ere long.
And yet the sun was bright : and as I knew
A little sun, with the Parisiennes,
Means light of heart, I could not but demand
"Why, now, so near to weeping, citizen ?"
She look'd up at me with vague surprise,
And said, "You see I 'm old ; I 'm very old :
I 'm eighty years and nine ; and people say
This winter will be hard. And we have here,
We poor old women in this hospital,
A mortal dread of one strange bitter thing.
We would be buried in a coffin, we ;
For each her own. It is not much you crave,

Who 've striven ninety years, and come to this,
And we would have the priest to say a prayer
To the good God for us, within the church,
Before we go the way that go we must.
And sou by sou we save : — a coffin costs, —
You hear, Sir ? — sixteen francs ; and if we go
To church en route, 't is six francs for the priest.
There 's some of us have sav'd it all, and smile,
With the receipt sew'd up, lest they should lose
This passport to the grave of honest folk.
But one may die before ; and then there is
One coffin for us all, and we are borne
To our last place, and slipp'd within the grave,
And back they take the coffin for the next.
And if you 've sixteen francs, and not the six,
No church, but just a sprinkle with the brush,
And half a prayer, and you must take your chance.
Good God ! and I shall die : I know I shall :
I feel it here ! and I have ten francs just :
No more ! " My tears fell like a shower of rain.
I said, " Old woman, here 's the other twelve ; "
And fled, with great strides, like a man possess'd.

A VISION OF CHILDREN

I DREAM'D I saw a little brook
Run rippling down the Strand ;
With cherry-trees and apple-trees
Abloom on either hand :
The sparrows gather'd from the Squares,
Upon the branches green ;
The pigeons flock'd from Palace-Yard,
Afresh their wings to preen ;
And children down St. Martin's Lane,
And out of Westminster,
Came trooping, many a thousand strong,
With a bewilder'd air.
They hugg'd each other round the neck
And titter'd for delight,
To see the yellow daffodils,
And see the daisies white ;
They roll'd upon the grassy slopes,
And drank the water clear,
While 'busses the Embankment took,
Asham'd to pass anear ;
And sandwich-men stood still aghast,
And costermongers smil'd ;
And the policeman on his beat
Pass'd, weeping like a child.

POETA NASCITUR

THE flame-wing'd seraph spake a word
To one of Galilee : —
" Be not afraid : know, of the Lord
Is that is born of thee."

And by the poet's bliss and woe
Learn we the will of Heaven :
He is God's instrument ; and so
Swords in his heart are seven.

He is God's oracle and slave,
As once the priestesses ;
His griefs in keeping we should have,
To heal, or make them less.

Theodore Watts

ODE TO MOTHER CAREY'S CHICKEN

(ON SEEING A STORM-PETREL IN A CAGE ON A COTTAGE WALL AND RELEASING IT)

GAZE not at me, my poor unhappy bird ;
That sorrow is more than human in thine eye ;
Too deep already is my spirit stirr'd
To see thee here, child of the sea and sky,
Coop'd in a cage with food thou canst not eat,
Thy " snow-flake " soil'd, and soil'd those conquering feet
That walk'd the billows, while thy " *sweet-sweet-sweet* "
Proclaim'd the tempest nigh.

Bird whom I welcom'd while the sailors curs'd,
Friend whom I bless'd wherever keels may roam,

Prince of my childish dreams, whom mermaids nurs'd
In purple of billows — silver of ocean-foam,
Abash'd I stand before the mighty grief
That quells all other: Sorrow's king and chief:
To ride the wind and hold the sea in fief,
Then find a cage for home!

From out thy jail thou seest yon heath and woods,
But canst thou hear the birds or smell the flowers?
Ah, no! those rain-drops twinkling on the buds
Bring only visions of the salt sea-showers.
"The sea!" the linnets pipe from hedge and heath;
"The sea!" the honeysuckles whisper and breathe;
And tumbling waves, where those wild-roses wreathe,
Murmur from inland bowers.

These winds so soft to others, — how they burn!
The mavis sings with gurgle and ripple and plash,
To thee yon swallow seems a wheeling tern.
And when the rain recalls the briny lash
Old Ocean's kiss thou lovest, — when thy sight
Is mock'd with Ocean's horses — manes of white,
The long and shadowy flanks, the shoulders bright —
Bright as the lightning's flash, —

When all these scents of heather and brier and whin,
All kindly breaths of land-shrub, flower, and vine,
Recall the sea-scents, till thy feather'd skin
Tingles in answer to a dream of brine, —
When thou, remembering there thy royal birth,
Dost see between the bars a world of dearth,
Is there a grief — a grief on all the earth —
So heavy and dark as thine?

But I can buy thy freedom — I (thank God!),
Who lov'd thee more than albatross or gull,
Lov'd thee when on the waves thy footsteps trod,
Dream'd of thee when, becalm'd, we lay a-hull —
'T is I thy friend who once, a child of six,
To find where Mother Carey fed her chicks,
Climb'd up the stranded punt, and with two sticks
Tried all in vain to scull, —

Thy friend who ow'd a Paradise of Storm, —
The little dreamer of the cliffs and coves,
Who knew thy mother, saw her shadowy form
Behind the cloudy bastions where she moves,
And heard her call: "Come! for the welkin thickens,
And tempests mutter and the lightning quickens!"
Then, starting from his dream, would find the chickens
Were only blue rock-doves, —

Thy friend who ow'd another Paradise
Of calmer air, a floating isle of fruit,
Where sang the Nereids on a breeze of spice
While Triton, from afar, would sound salute:
There wast thou winging, though the skies were calm,
For marvellous strains, as of the morning's shalm,
Were struck by ripples round that isle of palm
Whose shores were "Carey's lute."

And now to see thee here, my king, my king,
Far-glittering memories mirror'd in those eyes,
As if there shone within each iris-ring
An orbed world — ocean and hills and skies! —
Those black wings ruffled whose triumphant sweep
Conquer'd in sport! — yea, up the glimmering steep
Of highest billow, down the deepest deep,
Sported with victories!

To see thee here! — a coil of wilted weeds
Beneath those feet that danced on diamond spray,
Rider of sportive Ocean's reinless steeds —
Winner in Mother Carey's sabbath-fray

When, stung by magic of the witch's chant,
They rise, each foamy-crested combatant —
They rise and fall and leap and foam and gallop and pant
Till albatross, sea-swallow, and cormorant
Would flee like doves away!

And shalt thou ride no more where thou hast ridden,
And feast no more in hyaline halls and caves,
Master of Mother Carey's secrets hidden,
Master most equal of the wind and waves,
Who never, save in stress of angriest blast,
Ask'd ship for shelter, — never, till at last
The foam-flakes, hurl'd against the sloping mast,
Slash'd thee like whirling glaives!

Right home to fields no seamew ever kenn'd,
Where scarce the great sea-wanderer fares with thee,
I come to take thee — nay, 't is I, thy friend —
Ah, tremble not — I come to set thee free;
I come to tear this cage from off this wall,
And take thee hence to that fierce festival
Where billows march and winds are musical,
Hymning the Victor-Sea!

. . . . . .

Yea, lift thine eyes, my own can bear them now:
Thou 'rt free! thou 'rt free. Ah, surely a bird can smile!
Dost know me, Petrel? Dost remember how
I fed thee in the wake for many a mile,
Whilst thou wouldst pat the waves, then, rising, take
The morsel up and wheel about the wake?
Thou 'rt free, thou 'rt free, but for thine own dear sake
I keep thee caged awhile.

Away to sea! no matter where the coast:
The road that turns to home turns never wrong:
Where waves run high my bird will not be lost:
His home I know: 't is where the winds are strong, —
Where, on her throne of billows, rolling hoary
And green and blue and splash'd with sunny glory,
Far, far from shore — from farthest promontory —
The mighty Mother sings the triumphs of her story,
Sings to my bird the song!

THE SONNET'S VOICE

(A METRICAL LESSON BY THE SEASHORE)

YON silvery billows breaking on the beach
Fall back in foam beneath the star-shine clear,
The while my rhymes are murmuring in your ear
A restless lore like that the billows teach;
For on these sonnet-waves my soul would reach
From its own depths, and rest within you, dear,
As, through the billowy voices yearning here,
Great nature strives to find a human speech.
A sonnet is a wave of melody:
From heaving waters of the impassion'd soul
A billow of tidal music one and whole
Flows in the "octave;" then returning free,
Its ebbing surges in the "sestet" roll
Back to the deeps of Life's tumultuous sea.

COLERIDGE

I SEE thee pine like her in golden story
Who, in her prison, woke and saw, one day,
The gates thrown open — saw the sunbeams play,
With only a web 'tween her and summer's glory;
Who, when that web — so frail, so transitory
It broke before her breath — had fallen away,
Saw other webs and others rise for aye
Which kept her prison'd till her hair was hoary.
Those songs half-sung that yet were all-divine —
That woke Romance, the queen, to reign afresh —
Had been but preludes from that lyre of thine,
Could thy rare spirit's wings have pierced the mesh
Spun by the wizard who compels the flesh,
But lets the poet see how heav'n can shine.

THE BREATH OF AVON

TO THE PILGRIMS OF GREATER BRITAIN ON SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTHDAY

I

WHATE'ER of woe the Dark may hide in womb
For England, mother of kings of battle and song —
Be it rapine, racial hates, mysterious wrong,
Blizzard of Chance, or fiery dart of Doom —
Let breath of Avon, rich of meadow-bloom,
Bind her to that great daughter sever'd long —
To near and far-off children young and strong —
With fetters woven of Avon's flower perfume.
Welcome, ye English-speaking pilgrims, ye
Whose hands around the world are join'd by him,
Who make his speech the language of the sea,
Till winds of Ocean waft from rim to rim
The breath of Avon: let this great day be
A Feast of Race no power shall ever dim.

II

From where the steeds of Earth's twin oceans toss
Their manes along Columbia's chariot-way —
From where Australia's long blue billows play —
From where the morn, quenching the Southern Cross,
Startling the frigate-bird and albatross
Asleep in air, breaks over Table Bay —
Come hither, Pilgrims, where these rushes sway
'Tween grassy banks of Avon soft as moss!
For, if ye found the breath of Ocean sweet,
Sweeter is Avon's earthy, flowery smell,
Distill'd from roots that feel the coming spell
Of May, who bids all flowers that lov'd him meet
In meadows that, remembering Shakespeare's feet,
Hold still a dream of music where they fell.

THE FIRST KISS

IF only in dreams may man be fully blest,
Is heav'n a dream? Is she I clasp'd a dream?
Or stood she here even now where dew-drops gleam
And miles of furze shine golden down the West?
I seem to clasp her still — still on my breast
Her bosom beats, — I see the blue eyes beam: —
I think she kiss'd these lips, for now they seem
Scarce mine: so hallow'd of the lips they press'd!
Yon thicket's breath — can that be eglantine?
Those birds — can they be morning's choristers?
Can this be earth? Can these be banks of furze?
Like burning bushes fir'd of God they shine!
I seem to know them, though this body of mine
Pass'd into spirit at the touch of hers!

JOHN THE PILGRIM

A. D. 1249

(THE MIRAGE)

BENEATH the sand-storm John the Pilgrim prays;
But when he rises, lo! an Eden smiles,
Green leafy slopes, meadows of camomiles,
Clasp'd in a silvery river's winding maze:
"Water, water! Blessèd be God!" he says,
And totters gasping toward those happy isles.
Then all is fled! Over the sandy piles
The bald-ey'd vultures come and stand at gaze.
"God heard me not," says he, "blessèd be God,"
And dies. But as he nears the pearly strand,
Heav'n's outer coast where waiting angels stand,
He looks below: "Farewell, thou hooded clod,
Brown corpse the vultures tear on bloody sand,
God heard my prayer for life — blessèd be God!"

NATURA BENIGNA

What power is this? what witchery wins my fee
To peaks so sheer they scorn the cloaking snow
All silent as the emerald gulfs below,
Down whose ice-walls the wings of twilight beat?
What thrill of earth and heaven — most wild, most sweet —
What answering pulse that all the senses know
Comes leaping from the ruddy eastern glow
Where, far away, the skies and mountains meet?
Mother, 't is I once more: I know thee well,
Yet comes that throb, an ever-new surprise!
O Mother and Queen, beneath the olden spell
Of silence, gazing from thy hills and skies!
Dumb Mother, struggling with the years to tell
The secret at thy heart through helpless eyes.

NATURA MALIGNA

The Lady of the Hills with crimes untold
Follow'd my feet, with azure eyes of prey;
By glacier-brink she stood, — by cataract-spray —
When mists were dire, or avalanche-echoes roll'd.
At night she glimmer'd in the death-wind cold,
And if a foot-print shone at break of day,
My flesh would quail, but straight my soul would say:
"'T is hers whose hand God's mightier hand doth hold."
I trod her snow bridge, for the moon was bright,
Her icicle-arch across the sheer crevasse,
When lo, she stood! . . . God made her let me pass,
Then fell'd the bridge! . . . Oh, there in sallow light,
There down the chasm, I saw her cruel, white,
And all my wondrous days as in a glass.

David Gray

THE DEAR OLD TOILING ONE

Oh, many a leaf will fall to-night,
As she wanders through the wood!
And many an angry gust will break
The dreary solitude.
I wonder if she 's past the bridge,
Where Luggie moans beneath,
While rain-drops clash in planted lines
On rivulet and heath.
Disease hath laid his palsied palm
Upon my aching brow;
The headlong blood of twenty-one
Is thin and sluggish now.
'T is nearly ten! A fearful night,
Without a single star
To light the shadow on her soul
With sparkle from afar:
The moon is canopied with clouds,
And her burden it is sore;
What would wee Jackie do, if he
Should never see her more?
Ay, light the lamp, and hang it up
At the window fair and free;
'T will be a beacon on the hill
To let your mother see.
And trim it well, my little Ann,
For the night is wet and cold,
And you know the weary, winding way
Across the miry wold.
All drench'd will be her simple gown,
And the wet will reach her skin:
I wish that I could wander down,
And the red quarry win,
To take the burden from her back,
And place it upon mine;
With words of cheerful condolence,
Not utter'd to repine.
You have a kindly mother, dears,
As ever bore a child,
And Heaven knows I love her well
In passion undefil'd.
Ah me! I never thought that she
Would brave a night like this,
While I sat weaving by the fire
A web of fantasies.
How the winds beat this home of ours
With arrow-falls of rain;

This lonely home upon the hill
They beat with might and main.
And 'mid the tempest one lone heart
Anticipates the glow,
Whence, all her weary journey done,
Shall happy welcome flow.
'T is after ten ! O, were she here,
Young man although I be,
I could fall down upon her neck,
And weep right gushingly !
I have not lov'd her half enough,
The dear old toiling one,
The silent watcher by my bed,
In shadow or in sun.

I DIE, BEING YOUNG

"WHOM the gods love die young." The thought is old,
And yet it sooth'd the sweet Athenian mind.
I take it with all pleasure, overbold
Perhaps, yet to its virtue much inclin'd
By an inherent love for what is fair.
This is the utter poetry of woe,
That the bright-flashing gods should cure despair
By love, and make youth precious here below.
I die, being young ; and, dying, could become
A pagan, with the tender Grecian trust.
Let death, the fell anatomy, benumb
The hand that writes, and fill my mouth with dust :
Chant no funereal theme, but, with a choral
Hymn, O ye mourners, hail immortal youth auroral.

MY EPITAPH

BELOW lies one whose name was traced in sand.
He died, not knowing what it was to live :
Died, while the first sweet consciousness of manhood
To maiden thought electrified his soul,
Faint heatings in the calyx of the rose.
Bewilder'd reader, pass without a sigh,
In a proud sorrow ! There is life with God
In other kingdom of a sweeter air.
In Eden every flower is blown : Amen.

John Addington Symonds

AN EPISODE

VASARI tells that Luca Signorelli,
The morning star of Michael Angelo,
Had but one son, a youth of seventeen summers,
Who died. That day the master at his easel
Wielded the liberal brush wherewith he painted
At Orvieto, on the Duomo's walls,
Stern forms of Death and Heaven and Hell and Judgment.
Then came they to him, and cried : "Thy son is dead,
Slain in a duel ; but the bloom of life
Yet lingers round red lips and downy cheek."
Luca spoke not, but listen'd. Next they bore
His dead son to the silent painting-room,
And left on tiptoe son and sire alone.
Still Luca spoke and groan'd not ; but he rais'd
The wonderful dead youth, and smooth'd his hair,
Wash'd his red wounds, and laid him on a bed,
Naked and beautiful, where rosy curtains
Shed a soft glimmer of uncertain splendor
Life-like upon the marble limbs below.
Then Luca seiz'd his palette : hour by hour
Silence was in the room ; none durst approach :
Morn wore to noon, and noon to eve, when shyly
A little maid peep'd in, and saw the painter
Painting his dead son with unerring handstroke,
Firm and dry-ey'd before the lordly canvas.

LUX EST UMBRA DEI

NAY, Death, thou art a shadow! Even as light
Is but the shadow of invisible God,
And of that shade the shadow is thin Night,
Veiling the earth whereon our feet have trod;
So art Thou but the shadow of this life,
Itself the pale and unsubstantial shade
Of living God, fulfill'd by love and strife
Throughout the universe Himself hath made:
And as frail Night, following the flight of earth,
Obscures the world we breathe in, for a while,
So Thou, the reflex of our mortal birth,
Veilest the life wherein we weep and smile:
But when both earth and life are whirl'd away,
What shade can shroud us from God's deathless day?

THE NIGHTINGALE

I WENT a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

Hard task it were to tell how dewy-still
Were flowers and ferns and foliage in the rays
Of Hesper, white amid the daffodil
Of twilight fleck'd with faintest chrysoprase;
And all the while, embower'd in leafy bays,
The bird prolong'd her sharp soul-thrilling tone.

I went a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

But as I stood and listened, on the air
Arose another voice more clear and keen,
That startled silence with a sweet despair,
And still'd the bird beneath her leafy screen:
The star of Love, those lattice-boughs between,
Grew large and lean'd to listen from his zone.

I went a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

The voice, methought, was neither man's nor boy's,
Nor bird's nor woman's, but all these in one:
In Paradise perchance such perfect noise
Resounds from angel choirs in unison,
Chanting with cherubim their antiphon
To Christ and Mary on the sapphire throne.

I went a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

Then down the forest aisles there came a boy,
Unearthly pale, with passion in his eyes;
Who sang a song whereof the sound was joy,
But all the burden was of love that dies
And death that lives — a song of sobs and sighs,
A wild swan's note of Death and Love in one.

I went a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

Love burn'd within his luminous eyes, and Death
Had made his fluting voice so keen and high,
The wild wood trembled as he pass'd beneath,
With throbbing throat singing, Love-led, to die:
Then all was hush'd, till in the thicket nigh
The bird resum'd her sharp soul-thrilling tone.

I went a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

But in my heart and in my brain the cry,
The wail, the dirge, the dirge of Death and Love,
Still throbs and throbs, flute-like, and will not die,
Piercing and clear the night-bird's tune above, —

The aching, anguish'd, wild-swan's note, whereof
The sweet sad flower of song was overblown.

I went a roaming through the woods alone,
And heard the nightingale that made her moan.

THE FALL OF A SOUL

I SAT unsphering Plato ere I slept:
Then through my dream the choir of gods was borne,
Swift as the wind and splendid as the morn,
Fronting the night of stars; behind them swept
Tempestuous darkness o'er a drear descent,
Wherein I saw a crowd of charioteers
Urging their giddy steeds with cries and cheers,
To join the choir that aye before them went:
But one there was who fell, with broken car
And horses swooning down the gulf of gloom;
Heavenward his eyes, though prescient of their doom,
Reflected glory like a falling star,
While with wild hair blown back and listless hands
Ruining he sank toward undiscover'd lands.

FAREWELL

IT is buried and done with,
The love that we knew:
Those cobwebs we spun with
Are beaded with dew.

I lov'd thee; I leave thee:
To love thee was pain:
I dare not believe thee,
To love thee again.

Like spectres unshriven
Are the years that I lost;
To thee they were given
Without count of cost.

I cannot revive them
By penance or prayer:
Hell's tempest must drive them
Through turbulent air.

Farewell, and forget me;
For I too am free
From the shame that beset me,
The sorrow of thee.

IL FIOR DEGLI EROICI FURORI

(SAXIFRAGA PYRAMIDALIS)

I BLOOM but once, and then I perish;
This plume of snow
No sun or soft south wind will cherish—
'T is drooping now.

Black streams beneath me foam and thunder;
Their icy breath,
There where the rocks are rent asuuder,
Wooes me with death.

Still like a fair imperial streamer
I float and flaunt;
I am no light luxurious dreamer,
Whom dangers daunt.

For me no delicate life-lover
Will dare to bow;
My pyramid of bloom shall cover
No craven's brow.

But should some youth on whom the splendor
Of hope is high,
Who loves with love superb and tender
What cannot die,

Pass by this dark and awful dwelling,
He shall not shrink
From slippery rock or sick waves swelling
To the black brink;

But stoop and pluck the song I utter
Of death and joy:
Yea, my free plume of snow shall flutter
To greet the boy.

VENICE

VENICE, thou Siren of sea-cities, wrought
By mirage, built on water, stair o'er stair,
Of sunbeams and cloud-shadows, phantom-fair,
With naught of earth to mar thy sea-born thought!

Thou floating film upon the wonder-fraught
Ocean of dreams! Thou hast no dream so rare
As are thy sons and daughters, they who wear
Foam-flakes of charm from thine enchantment caught!
O dark brown eyes! O tangles of dark hair!
O heaven-blue eyes, blonde tresses where the breeze
Plays over sun-burn'd cheeks in sea-blown air!
Firm limbs of moulded bronze! frank debonair
Smiles of deep-bosom'd women! Loves that seize
Man's soul, and waft her on storm-melodies!

THYSELF

GIVE me thyself! It were as well to cry:
Give me the splendor of this night of June!
Give me yon star upon the swart lagoon
Trembling in unapproach'd serenity!
Our gondola, that four swift oarsmen ply,
Shoots from the darkening Lido's sandy dune,
Splits with her steel the mirrors of the moon,
Shivers the star-beams that before us fly.
Give me thyself! This prayer is even a knell,
Warning me back to mine own impotence.
Self gives not self; and souls sequester'd dwell
In the dark fortalice of thought and sense,
Where, though life's prisoners call from cell to cell,
Each pines alone and may not issue thence.

THE SONNET

I

THE Sonnet is a fruit which long hath slept
And ripen'd on life's sun-warm'd orchard-wall;
A gem which, hardening in the mystical
Mine of man's heart, to quenchless flame hath leapt;
A medal of pure gold art's nympholept
Stamps with love's lips and brows imperial;
A branch from memory's briar, whereon the fall
Of thought-eternalizing tears hath wept:
A star that shoots athwart star-steadfast heaven;
A fluttering aigrette of toss'd passion's brine;
A leaf from youth's immortal missal torn;
A bark across dark seas of anguish driven;
A feather dropp'd from breast-wings aquiline;
A silvery dream shunning red lips of morn.

II

There is no mood, no heart-throb fugitive,
No spark from man's imperishable mind,
No moment of man's will, that may not find
Form in the Sonnet; and thenceforward live
A potent elf, by art's imperative
Magic to crystal spheres of song confin'd:
As in the moonstone's orb pent spirits wind
'Mid dungeon depths day-beams they take and give.
Spare thou no pains; carve thought's pure diamond
With fourteen facets, scattering fire and light:—
Uncut, what jewel burns but darkly bright?
And Prospero vainly waves his runic wand,
If spurning art's inexorable law
In Ariel's prison-sphere he leave one flaw.

III

The Sonnet is a world, where feelings caught
In webs of phantasy, combine and fuse
Their kindred elements 'neath mystic dews
Shed from the ether round man's dwelling wrought;
Distilling heart's content, star-fragrance fraught
With influences from the breathing fires
Of heaven in everlasting endless gyres
Enfolding and encircling orbs of thought.
Our Sonnet's world hath two fix'd hemispheres:
This, where the sun with fierce strength masculine
Pours his keen rays and bids the noonday shine;
That, where the moon and the stars, concordant powers,
Shed milder rays, and daylight disappears
In low melodious music of still hours.

Alexander Hay Japp

A MUSIC LESSON

FINGERS on the holes, Johnny,
  Fairly in a raw :
Lift this and then that,
  And blaw, blaw, blaw !
That 's hoo to play, Johnny,
  On the pipes sae shrill :
Never was the piper yet
  But needit a' his skill.

And lang and sair he tried it, tae,
  Afore he wan the knack
O' making bag and pipe gie
  His verra yearnin's back.
The echo tae his heart-strings
  Frae sic a thing to come ;
Oh, is it no a wonder —
  Like a voice frae out the dumb ?

Tak' tentie, noo, my Johnny lad,
  Ye maunna hurry thro',
Tak' time and try it ower again —
  Sic a blast ye blew !
It 's no alane by blawing strang,
  But eke by blawing true,
That ye can mak' the music
  To thrill folk thro' and thro'.

The waik folk and the learnin',
  'T is them that mak's the din ;
But for the finish'd pipers
  They count it as a sin :
And maybe it 's the verra same
  A' the warld thro',
The learners are the verra ones
  That mak' the most ado !

Ye ken the Southrons taunt us —
  I sayna they 're unfair —
Aboot oor squallin' music,
  And their taunts hae hurt me sair ;
But if they 'd heard a piper true
  At nicht come ower the hill,
Playin' up a pibroch
  Upon the wind sae still :

Risin' noo, and fallin' noo,
  And floatin' on the air,
The sounds come saftly on ye
  Amaist ere ye 're aware,
And wind themsels aboot the heart,
  That hasna yet forgot
The witchery o' love and joy
  Within some lanely spot :

I 'm sure they wadna taunt us sae,
  Nor say the bagpipe 's wild,
Nor speak o' screachin' noises
  Enuch to deave a child :
They would say the bagpipe only
  Is the voice of hill and glen ;
And would listen to it sorrowing,
  Within the haunts of men.

Fingers on the holes, Johnny,
  Fairly in a raw :
Lift this and then that,
  And blaw, blaw, blaw !
That 's hoo to play, Johnny,
  On the pipes sae shrill :
Never was the piper yet
  But needit a' his skill.

LANDOR

LIKE crown'd athlete that in a race has run,
And points his finger at those left behind,
And follows on his way as now inclin'd,
With song and laughter in the glowing sun ;
And joys at that which he hath joyous done,
And, like a child, will wanton with the wind,
And pluck the flowers his radiant brows to bind —
Re-crown himself as conscious he hath won ;
And still regardless of his fellow-men
He follows on his road intent and fain
To please himself, and caring not to gain
The world's applause which he might seek in vain :
A soldier, yet would, careless, sport and play
And leave the reckoning for a distant day.

SHELLEY

THE odor of a rose : light of a star :
The essence of a flame blown on by wind,
That lights and warms all near it, bland and kind,
But aye consumes itself, as though at war

With what supports and feeds it ; — from afar
It draws its life, but evermore inclin'd
To leap into the flame that makes men blind
Who seek the secret of all things that are.
Such wert thou, Shelley, bound for airiest goal :
Interpreter of quintessential things :
Who mounted ever up on eagle-wings
Of phantasy : had aim'd at heaven and stole
Promethean fire for men to be as gods,
And dwell in free, aerial abodes.

MEMORIES

My love he went to Burdon Fair,
And of all the gifts that he saw there
Was none could his great love declare ;
So he brought me marjoram smelling rare —
Its sweetness filled all the air.
Oh, the days I dote on yet,
Marjoram, pansies, mignonette !

My love he sail'd across the sea,
And all to make a home for me.
Oh, sweet his last kiss on the lea,
The pansies pluck'd beneath the tree,
When he said, "My love, I'll send for thee !"
Oh, the days I dote on yet,
Marjoram, pansies, mignonette !

His mother sought for me anon ;
So long my name she would not own.
Ah, gladly would she now atone,
For we together make our moan !
She brought the mignonette I 've sown.
Oh, the days I dote on yet,
Marjoram, pansies, mignonette !

Cosmo Monkhouse

SONG

Who calls me bold because I won my love,
And did not pine,
And waste my life with secret pain, but strove
To make him mine ?

I us'd no arts ; 't was Nature's self that taught
My eye to speak,
And bid the burning blush to paint unsought
My flashing cheek ;

That made my voice to tremble when I bid
My love " Goodby,"
So weak that every other sound was hid,
Except a sigh.

Oh, was it wrong to use the truth I knew,
That hearts are mov'd,
And spring warm-struck with life and love anew,
By being lov'd ?

One night there came a tear, that, big and loth,
Stole 'neath my brow.
'T was thus I won my heart's own heart, and both
Are happy now.

A DEAD MARCH

Play me a march, low-ton'd and slow — a march for a silent tread,
Fit for the wandering feet of one who dreams of the silent dead,
Lonely, between the bones below and the souls that are overhead.

Here for a while they smil'd and sang, alive in the interspace,
Here with the grass beneath the foot, and the stars above the face,
Now are their feet beneath the grass, and whither has flown their grace ?

Who shall assure us whence they come, or tell us the way they go ?
Verily, life with them was joy, and, now they have left us, woe,
Once they were not, and now they are not, and this is the sum we know.

Orderly range the seasons due, and orderly
roll the stars.
How shall we deem the soldier brave who
frets of his wounds and scars?
Are we as senseless brutes that we should
dash at the well-seen bars?

No, we are here, with feet unfix'd, but ever
as if with lead
Drawn from the orbs which shine above to
the orb on which we tread,
Down to the dust from which we came and
with which we shall mingle dead.

No, we are here to wait, and work, and
strain our banish'd eyes,
Weary and sick of soil and toil, and hungry
and fain for skies
Far from the reach of wingless men, and
not to be scal'd with cries.

No, we are here to bend our necks to the
yoke of tyrant Time,
Welcoming all the gifts he gives us — glo-
ries of youth and prime,
Patiently watching them all depart as our
heads grow white as rime.

Why do we mourn the days that go — for
the same sun shines each day,
Ever a spring her primrose hath, and ever
a May her may;
Sweet as the rose that died last year is the
rose that is born to-day.

Do we not too return, we men, as ever the
round earth whirls?
Never a head is dimm'd with gray but an-
other is sunn'd with curls;
She was a girl and he was a boy, but yet
there are boys and girls.

Ah, but alas for the smile of smiles that
never but one face wore;
Ah, for the voice that has flown away like
a bird to an unseen shore;
Ah, for the face — the flower of flowers —
that blossoms on earth no more.

THE SPECTRUM

How many colors here do we see set,
Like rings upon God's finger? Some say
three,
Some four, some six, some seven. All agree
To left of red, to right of violet,
Waits darkness deep as night and black as
jet.
And so we know what Noah saw we see,
Nor less nor more — of God's emblazonry
A shred — a sign of glory known not yet.
If red can glide to yellow, green to blue,
What joys may yet await our wider eyes
When we rewake upon a wider shore!
What deep pulsations, exquisite and new!
What keener, swifter raptures may surprise
Men born to see the rainbow and no more!

THE SECRET

She passes in her beauty bright
Amongst the mean, amongst the gay,
And all are brighter for the sight,
And bless her as she goes her way.

And now a gleam of pity pours,
And now a spark of spirit flies,
Uncounted, from the unlock'd stores
Of her rich lips and precious eyes.

And all men look, and all men smile,
But no man looks on her as I:
They mark her for a little while,
But I will watch her till I die.

And if I wonder now and then
Why this so strange a thing should be —
That she be seen by wiser men
And only duly lov'd by me:

I only wait a little longer,
And watch her radiance in the room;
Here making light a little stronger,
And there obliterating gloom,

(Like one who, in a tangled way,
Watches the broken sun fall through,
Turning to gold the faded spray,
And making diamonds of dew).

Until at last, as my heart burns,
She gathers all her scatter'd light,
And undivided radiance turns
Upon me like a sea of light.

And then I know they see in part
That which God lets me worship whole:
He gives them glances of her heart,
But me, the sunshine of her soul.

Robert Buchanan

THE BALLAD OF JUDAS ISCARIOT

'T WAS the body of Judas Iscariot
Lay in the Field of Blood ;
'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Beside the body stood.

Black was the earth by night,
And black was the sky ;
Black, black were the broken clouds,
Tho' the red Moon went by.

'T was the body of Judas Iscariot
Strangled and dead lay there ;
'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Look'd on it in despair.

The breath of the World came and went
Like a sick man's in rest ;
Drop by drop on the World's eyes
The dews fell cool and blest.

Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
Did make a gentle moan —
"I will bury underneath the ground
My flesh and blood and bone.

"I will bury deep beneath the soil,
Lest mortals look thereon,
And when the wolf and raven come
The body will be gone !

"The stones of the field are sharp as steel,
And hard and bold, God wot ;
And I must bear my body hence
Until I find a spot ! "

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
So grim, and gaunt, and gray,
Rais'd the body of Judas Iscariot,
And carried it away.

And as he bare it from the field
Its touch was cold as ice,
And the ivory teeth within the jaw
Rattled aloud, like dice.

As the soul of Judas Iscariot
Carried its load with pain,
The Eye of Heaven, like a lanthorn's eye,
Open'd and shut again.

Half he walk'd, and half he seem'd
Lifted on the cold wind ;
He did not turn, for chilly hands
Were pushing from behind.

The first place that he came unto
It was the open wold,
And underneath were prickly whins,
And a wind that blew so cold.

The next place that he came unto
It was a stagnant pool,
And when he threw the body in
It floated light as wool.

He drew the body on his back,
And it was dripping chill,
And the next place that he came unto
Was a Cross upon a hill.

A Cross upon the windy hill,
And a Cross on either side,
Three skeletons that swing thereon,
Who had been crucified.

And on the middle cross-bar sat
A white Dove slumbering ;
Dim it sat in the dim light,
With its head beneath its wing.

And underneath the middle Cross
A grave yawn'd wide and vast,
But the soul of Judas Iscariot
Shiver'd, and glided past.

The fourth place that he came unto
It was the Brig of Dread,
And the great torrents rushing down
Were deep, and swift, and red.

He dar'd not fling the body in
For fear of faces dim,
And arms were wav'd in the wild water
To thrust it back to him.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Turn'd from the Brig of Dread,
And the dreadful foam of the wild water
Had splash'd the body red.

For days and nights he wander'd on
Upon an open plain,

And the days went by like blinding mist,
  And the nights like rushing rain.

For days and nights he wander'd on,
  All thro' the Wood of Woe ;
And the nights went by like moaning wind,
  And the days like drifting snow.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Came with a weary face —
Alone, alone, and all alone,
  Alone in a lonely place !

He wander'd east, he wander'd west,
  And heard no human sound ;
For months and years, in grief and tears,
  He wander'd round and round.

For months and years, in grief and tears,
  He walk'd the silent night ;
Then the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Perceiv'd a far-off light.

A far-off light across the waste,
  As dim as dim might be,
That came and went like a lighthouse gleam
  On a black night at sea.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Crawl'd to the distant gleam ;
And the rain came down, and the rain was blown
  Against him with a scream.

For days and nights he wander'd on,
  Push'd on by hands behind ;
And the days went by like black, black rain,
  And the nights like rushing wind.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot,
  Strange, and sad, and tall,
Stood all alone at dead of night
  Before a lighted hall.

And the wold was white with snow,
  And his foot-marks black and damp,
And the ghost of the silver Moon arose,
  Holding her yellow lamp.

And the icicles were on the eaves,
  And the walls were deep with white,
And the shadows of the guests within
  Pass'd on the window light.

The shadows of the wedding guests
  Did strangely come and go,
And the body of Judas Iscariot
  Lay stretch'd along the snow.

The body of Judas Iscariot
  Lay stretch'd along the snow ;
'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Ran swiftly to and fro.

To and fro, and up and down,
  He ran so swiftly there,
As round and round the frozen Pole
  Glideth the lean white bear.

'T was the Bridegroom sat at the table-head,
  And the lights burn'd bright and clear —
"Oh, who is that," the Bridegroom said,
  "Whose weary feet I hear ?"

'T was one look'd from the lighted hall,
  And answer'd soft and slow,
"It is a wolf runs up and down
  With a black track in the snow."

The Bridegroom in his robe of white
  Sat at the table-head —
"Oh, who is that who moans without ?"
  The blessed Bridegroom said.

'T was one look'd from the lighted hall,
  And answer'd fierce and low,
"'T is the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Gliding to and fro."

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Did hush itself and stand,
And saw the Bridegroom at the door
  With a light in his hand.

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
  And he was clad in white,
And far within the Lord's Supper
  Was spread so long and bright.

The Bridegroom shaded his eyes and look'd,
  And his face was bright to see —
"What dost thou here at the Lord's Supper
  With thy body's sins ?" said he.

'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
  Stood black, and sad, and bare —

"I have wander'd many nights and days ;
There is no light elsewhere."

'T was the wedding guests cried out within,
And their eyes were fierce and bright —
"Scourge the soul of Judas Iscariot
Away into the night!"

The Bridegroom stood in the open door,
And he wav'd hands still and slow,
And the third time that he wav'd his hands
The air was thick with snow.

And of every flake of falling snow,
Before it touch'd the ground,
There came a dove, and a thousand doves
Made sweet sound.

'T was the body of Judas Iscariot
Floated away full fleet,
And the wings of the doves that bare it off
Were like its winding-sheet.

'T was the Bridegroom stood at the open door,
And beckon'd, smiling sweet ;
'T was the soul of Judas Iscariot
Stole in, and fell at his feet.

"The Holy Supper is spread within,
And the many candles shine,
And I have waited long for thee
Before I pour'd the wine!"

The supper wine is pour'd at last,
The lights burn bright and fair,
Iscariot washes the Bridegroom's feet,
And dries them with his hair.

SPRING SONG IN THE CITY

Who remains in London,
In the streets with me,
Now that Spring is blowing
Warm winds from the sea ;
Now that trees grow green and tall,
Now the sun shines mellow,
And with moist primroses all
English lanes are yellow?

Little barefoot maiden,
Selling violets blue,
Hast thou ever pictur'd
Where the sweetlings grew?

Oh, the warm wild woodland ways,
Deep in dewy grasses,
Where the wind-blown shadow strays,
Scented as it passes!

Pedlar breathing deeply,
Toiling into town,
With the dusty highway
You are dusky brown ;
Hast thou seen by daisied leas,
And by rivers flowing,
Lilac-ringlets which the breeze
Loosens lightly blowing?

Out of yonder wagon
Pleasant hay-scents float,
He who drives it carries
A daisy in his coat :
Oh, the English meadows, fair
Far beyond all praises!
Freckled orchids everywhere
Mid the snow of daisies!

Now in busy silence
Broods the nightingale,
Choosing his love's dwelling
In a dimpled dale ;
Round the leafy bower they raise
Rose-trees wild are springing ;
Underneath, thro' the green haze,
Bounds the brooklet singing.

And his love is silent
As a bird can be,
For the red buds only
Fill the red rose-tree ;
Just as buds and blossoms blow
He 'll begin his tune,
When all is green and roses glow
Underneath the moon.

Nowhere in the valleys
Will the wind be still,
Everything is waving,
Wagging at his will :
Blows the milkmaid's kirtle clean,
With her hand press'd on it ;
Lightly o'er the hedge so green
Blows the ploughboy's bonnet.

Oh, to be a-roaming
In an English dell!
Every nook is wealthy,
All the world looks well,

Tinted soft the Heavens glow,
Over Earth and Ocean,
Waters flow, breezes blow,
All is light and motion!

THE WAKE OF TIM O'HARA

(SEVEN DIALS)

To the Wake of O'Hara
Came company;
All St. Patrick's Alley
Was there to see,
With the friends and kinsmen
Of the family.
On the long deal table lay Tim in white,
And at his pillow the burning light.
Pale as himself, with the tears on her cheek,
The mother receiv'd us, too full to speak;
But she heap'd the fire, and on the board
Set the black bottle with never a word,
While the company gather'd, one and all,
Men and women, big and small:
Not one in the Alley but felt a call
To the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

At the face of O'Hara,
All white with sleep,
Not one of the women
But took a peep,
And the wives new-wedded
Began to weep.
The mothers gather'd round about,
And prais'd the linen and laying out,—
For white as snow was his winding-sheet,
And all was peaceful, and clean, and sweet;
And the old wives, praising the blessed dead,
Were thronging around the old press-bed,
Where O'Hara's widow, tatter'd and torn,
Held to her bosom the babe new-born,
And star'd all around her, with eyes forlorn,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

For the heart of O'Hara
Was good as gold,
And the life of O'Hara
Was bright and bold,
And his smile was precious
To young and old!
Gay as a guinea, wet or dry,
With a smiling mouth, and a twinkliug eye!
Had ever an answer for chaff and fun;
Would fight like a lion, with any one!
Not a neighbor of any trade
But knew some joke that the boy had made;
Not a neighbor, dull or bright,
But minded *something* — frolic or fight,
And whisper'd it round the fire that night,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

"To God be glory
In death and life,
He 's taken O'Hara
From trouble and strife!"
Said one-eyed Biddy,
The apple-wife.
"God bless old Ireland!" said Mistress Hart,
Mother to Mike of the donkey-cart;
"God bless old Ireland till all be done,
She never made wake for a better son!"
And all join'd chorus, and each one said
Something kind of the boy that was dead;
And the bottle went round from lip to lip,
And the weeping widow, for fellowship,
Took the glass of old Biddy and had a sip,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

Then we drank to O'Hara
With drams to the brim,
While the face of O'Hara
Look'd on so grim,
In the corpse-light shining
Yellow and dim.
The cup of liquor went round again,
And the talk grew louder at every drain;
Louder the tongue of the women grew!
The lips of the boys were loosening too!
The widow her weary eyelids clos'd,
And, soothed by the drop o' drink, she doz'd;
The mother brighten'd and laugh'd to hear
Of O'Hara's fight with the grenadier,
And the hearts of all took better cheer,
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

Tho' the face of O'Hara
Look'd on so wan,
In the chimney-corner
The row began—
Lame Tony was in it,
The oyster-man;
For a dirty low thief from the North came near,
And whistled "Boyne Water" in his ear,

And Tony, with never a word of grace,
Flung out his fist in the blackguard's face ;
And the girls and women scream'd out for fright,
And the men that were drunkest began to fight :
Over the tables and chairs they threw, —
The corpse-light tumbled, — the trouble grew, —
The new-born join'd in the hullabaloo, —
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

" Be still ! be silent !
Ye do a sin !
Shame be his portion
Who dares begin ! "
'T was Father O'Connor
Just enter'd in !
All look'd down, and the row was done,
And sham'd and sorry was every one ;
But the Priest just smil'd quite easy and free —
" Would ye wake the poor boy from his sleep ? " said he :
And he said a prayer, with a shining face,
Till a kind of brightness fill'd the place ;
The women lit up the dim corpse-light,
The men were quieter at the sight,
And the peace of the Lord fell on all that night
At the Wake of Tim O'Hara.

TWO SONS

I HAVE two sons, wife —
Two, and yet the same ;
One his wild way runs, wife,
Bringing us to shame.
The one is bearded, sunburnt, grim, and fights across the sea,
The other is a little child who sits upon your knee.

One is fierce and cold, wife,
As the wayward deep ;
Him no arms could hold, wife,
Him no breast could keep.
He has tried our hearts for many a year, not broken them ; for he
Is still the sinless little one that sits upon your knee.

One may fall in fight, wife —
Is he not our son ?
Pray with all your might, wife,
For the wayward one ;
Pray for the dark, rough soldier, who fights across the sea,
Because you love the little shade who smiles upon your knee.

One across the foam, wife,
As I speak may fall ;
But this one at home, wife,
Cannot die at all.
They both are only one ; and how thankful should we be,
We cannot lose the darling son who sits upon your knee !

ON A YOUNG POETESS'S GRAVE

UNDER her gentle seeing,
In her delicate little hand,
They placed the Book of Being,
To read and understand.

The Book was mighty and olden,
Yea, worn and eaten with age ;
Though the letters look'd great and golden,
She could not read a page.

The letters flutter'd before her,
And all look'd sweetly wild :
Death saw her, and bent o'er her,
As she pouted her lips and smil'd.

And weary a little with tracing
The Book, she look'd aside,
And lightly smiling, and placing
A Flower in its leaves, she died.

She died, but her sweetness fled not,
As fly the things of power, —
For the Book wherein she read not
Is the sweeter for the Flower.

THE SUMMER POOL

THERE is a singing in the summer air,
The blue and brown moths flutter o'er the grass,
The stubble bird is creaking in the wheat,
And perch'd upon the honeysuckle-hedge
Pipes the green linnet. Oh, the golden world !
The stir of life on every blade of grass,
The motion and the joy on every bough,
The glad feast everywhere, for things that love
The sunshine, and for things that love the shade !

Aimlessly wandering with weary feet,
Watching the wool-white clouds that wander by,
I come upon a lonely place of shade, —
A still green Pool, where with soft sound and stir
The shadows of o'erhanging branches sleep,
Save where they leave one dreamy space of blue,
O'er whose soft stillness ever and anon
The feathery cirrus blows. Here unaware
I pause, and leaning on my staff I add
A shadow to the shadows ; and behold !
Dim dreams steal down upon me, with a hum
Of little wings, a murmuring of boughs,
The dusky stir and motion dwelling here,
Within this small green world. O'ershadow'd
By dusky greenery, tho' all around
The sunshine throbs on fields of wheat and bean,
Downward I gaze into the dreamy blue,
And pass into a waking sleep, wherein
The green boughs rustle, feathery wreaths of cloud
Pass softly, piloted by golden airs :
The air is still, — no birds sing any more, —
And helpless as a tiny flying thing,
I am alone in all the world with God.

The wind dies — not a leaf stirs — on the Pool
The fly scarce moves ; earth seems to hold her breath
Until her heart stops, listening silently
For the far footsteps of the coming rain !

While thus I pause, it seems that I have gain'd
New eyes to see ; my brain grows sensitive
To trivial things that, at another hour,
Had pass'd unheeded. Suddenly the air
Shivers, the shadows in whose midst I stand
Tremble and blacken — the blue eye o' the Pool
Is clos'd and clouded ; with a sudden gleam
Oiling its wings, a swallow darteth past,
And weedling flowers beneath my feet thrust up
Their leaves, to feel the fragrant shower. Oh, hark !
The thirsty leaves are troubled into sighs,
And up above me, on the glistening boughs,
Patters the summer rain !

Into a nook,
Screen'd by thick foliage of oak and beech,
I creep for shelter ; and the summer shower
Murmurs around me. Oh, the drowsy sounds !
The pattering rain, the numerous sigh of leaves,
The deep, warm breathing of the scented air,
Sink sweet into my soul —until at last
Comes the soft ceasing of the gentle fall,
And lo ! the eye of blue within the Pool
Opens again, while with a silvern gleam
Dew-diamonds twinkle moistly on the leaves,
Or, shaken downward by the summer wind,
Fall melting on the Pool in rings of light !

WE ARE CHILDREN

Children indeed are we — children that wait
Within a wondrous dwelling, while on high
Stretch the sad vapors and the voiceless sky ;
The house is fair, yet all is desolate
Because our Father comes not ; clouds of fate
Sadden above us —shivering we espy
The passing rain, the cloud before the gate,
And cry to one another, " He is nigh ! "
At early morning, with a shining Face,
He left us innocent and lily-crown'd ;
And now this late — night cometh on apace —
We hold each other's hands and look around,
Frighted at our own shades ! Heaven send us grace !
When He returns, all will be sleeping sound.

WHEN WE ARE ALL ASLEEP

When He returns, and finds the world so drear,
All sleeping, young and old, unfair and fair,
Will he stoop down and whisper in each ear,
" Awaken ! " or for pity's sake forbear,

Saying, "How shall I meet their frozen stare
Of wonder, and their eyes so full of fear?
How shall I comfort them in their despair,
If they cry out, 'Too late! let us sleep here'?"
Perchance He will not wake us up, but when
He sees us look so happy in our rest,
Will murmur, "Poor dead women and dead men!
Dire was their doom, and weary was their quest.
Wherefore awake them into life again?
Let them sleep on untroubled — it is best."

THE DREAM OF THE WORLD WITHOUT DEATH

FROM "THE BOOK OF ORM"

Now, sitting by her side, worn out with weeping,
Behold, I fell to sleep, and had a vision,
Wherein I heard a wondrous Voice intoning:

Crying aloud, "The Master on His throne
Openeth now the seventh seal of wonder,
And beckoneth back the angel men name Death.

"And at His feet the mighty Angel kneeleth,
Breathing not; and the Lord doth look upon him,
Saying, 'Thy wanderings on earth are ended.'

"And lo! the mighty Shadow sitteth idle
Even at the silver gates of heaven,
Drowsily looking in on quiet waters,
And puts his silence among men no longer."

. . . . . .

The world was very quiet. Men in traffic
Cast looks over their shoulders; pallid seamen
Shiver'd to walk upon the decks alone;

And women barr'd their doors with bars of iron,
In the silence of the night; and at the sunrise
Trembled behind the husbandmen afield.

I could not see a kirkyard near or far;
I thirsted for a green grave, and my vision
Was weary for the white gleam of a tombstone.

But harkening dumbly, ever and anon
I heard a cry out of a human dwelling,
And felt the cold wind of a lost one's going.

One struck a brother fiercely, and he fell,
And faded in a darkness; and that other
Tore his hair, and was afraid, and could not perish.

One struck his aged mother on the mouth,
And she vanish'd with a gray grief from his hearth-stone.
One melted from her bairn, and on the ground

With sweet unconscious eyes the bairn lay smiling.
And many made a weeping among mountains,
And hid themselves in caverns, and were drunken.

I heard a voice from out the beauteous earth,
Whose side roll'd up from winter into summer,
Crying, "I am grievous for my children."

I heard a voice from out the hoary ocean,
Crying, "Burial in the breast of me were better,
Yea, burial in the salt flags and green crystals."

I heard a voice from out the hollow ether,
Saying, "The thing ye curs'd hath been abolish'd —
Corruption and decay, and dissolution!"

And the world shriek'd, and the summertime was bitter,
And men and women fear'd the air behind them;
And for lack of its green graves the world was hateful.

. . . . . .

Now at the bottom of a snowy mountain
I came upon a woman thin with sorrow,
Whose voice was like the crying of a seagull:

Saying, "O Angel of the Lord, come hither,
And bring me him I seek for on thy bosom,
That I may close his eyelids and embrace him.

"I curse thee that I cannot look upon him!
I curse thee that I know not he is sleeping!
Yet know that he has vanish'd upon God!

"I laid my little girl upon a wood-bier,
And very sweet she seem'd, and near unto me;
And slipping flowers into her shroud was comfort.

"I put my silver mother in the darkness,
And kiss'd her, and was solaced by her kisses,
And set a stone, to mark the place, above her.

"And green, green were their sleeping-places,
So green that it was pleasant to remember
That I and my tall man would sleep beside them.

"The closing of dead eyelids is not dreadful,
For comfort comes upon us when we close them,
And tears fall, and our sorrow grows familiar;

"And we can sit above them where they slumber,
And spin a dreamy pain into a sweetness,
And know indeed that we are very near them.

"But to reach out empty arms is surely dreadful,
And to feel the hollow empty world is awful,
And bitter grows the silence and the distance.

"There is no space for grieving or for weeping;
No touch, no cold, no agony to strive with,
And nothing but a horror and a blankness!"

. . . . . .

Now behold I saw a woman in a mud-hut
Raking the white spent embers with her fingers,
And fouling her bright hair with the white ashes.

Her mouth was very bitter with the ashes;
Her eyes with dust were blinded; and her sorrow
Sobb'd in the throat of her like gurgling water.

And all around the voiceless hills were hoary,
But red lights scorch'd their edges; and above her
There was a soundless trouble of the vapors.

"Whither, and O whither," said the woman,
"O Spirit of the Lord, hast thou convey'd them,
My little ones, my little son and daughter?

"For, lo! we wander'd forth at early morning,
And winds were blowing round us, and their mouths
Blew rose-buds to the rose-buds, and their eyes

"Look'd violets at the violets, and their hair
Made sunshine in the sunshine, and their passing
Left a pleasure in the dewy leaves behind them;

"And suddenly my little son look'd upward
And his eyes were dried like dew-drops; and his going
Was like a blow of fire upon my face;

"And my little son was gone. My little daughter
Look'd round me for him, clinging to my vesture;
But the Lord had drawn him from me, and I knew it

"By the sign He gives the stricken, that the lost one
Lingers nowhere on the earth, on the hill or valley,
Neither underneath the grasses nor the tree-roots.

"And my shriek was like the splitting of an ice-reef,
And I sank among my hair, and all my palm
Was moist and warm where the little hand had fill'd it.

"Then I fled and sought him wildly, hither and thither —
Though I knew that he was stricken from me wholly
By the token that the Spirit gives the stricken.

"I sought him in the sunlight and the starlight,
I sought him in great forests, and in waters
Where I saw my own pale image looking at me.

"And I forgot my little bright-hair'd daughter,
Though her voice was like a wild-bird's far behind me,
Till the voice ceas'd, and the universe was silent.

"And stilly, in the starlight, came I backward
To the forest where I miss'd him ; and no voices
Brake the stillness as I stoop'd down in the starlight,

"And saw two little shoes filled up with dew,
And no mark of little footsteps any farther,
And knew my little daughter had gone also."

. . . . . .

But beasts died ; yea, the cattle in the yoke,
The milk-cow in the meadow, and the sheep,
And the dog upon the doorstep : and men envied.

And birds died ; yea, the eagle at the sun-gate,
The swan upon the waters, and the farm-fowl,
And the swallows on the housetops : and men envied.

And reptiles ; yea, the toad upon the road-side,
The slimy, speckled snake among the grass,
The lizard on the ruin : and men envied.

The dog in lonely places cried not over
The body of his master ; but it miss'd him,
And whin'd into the air, and died, and rotted.

The traveller's horse lay swollen in the pathway,
And the blue fly fed upon it ; but no traveller
Was there ; nay, not his footprint on the ground.

The cat mew'd in the midnight, and the blind
Gave a rustle, and the lamp burnt blue and faint,
And the father's bed was empty in the morning.

The mother fell to sleep beside the cradle,
Rocking it, while she slumber'd, with her foot,
And waken'd, — and the cradle there was empty.

I saw a two-years' child, and he was playing ;
And he found a dead white bird upon the doorway,
And laugh'd, and ran to show it to his mother.

The mother moan'd, and clutch'd him, and was bitter,
And flung the dead white bird across the threshold ;
And another white bird flitted round and round it,

And utter'd a sharp cry, and twitter'd and twitter'd,
And lit beside its dead mate, and grew busy,
Strewing it over with green leaves and yellow.

. . . . . .

So far, so far to seek for were the limits
Of affliction; and men's terror grew a homeless
Terror, yea, and a fatal sense of blankness.

There was no little token of distraction,
There was no visible presence of bereavement,
Such as the mourner easeth out his heart on.

There was no comfort in the slow farewell,
No gentle shutting of beloved eyes,
Nor beautiful broodings over sleeping features.

There were no kisses on familiar faces,
No weaving of white grave-clothes, no last pondering
Over the still wax cheeks and folded fingers.

There was no putting tokens under pillows,
There was no dreadful beauty slowly fading,
Fading like moonlight softly into darkness.

There were no churchyard paths to walk on, thinking
How near the well-beloved ones are lying.
There were no sweet green graves to sit and muse on,

Till grief should grow a summer meditation,
The shadow of the passing of an angel,
And sleeping should seem easy, and not cruel.

Nothing but wondrous parting and a blankness.

. . . . . .

But I woke, and, lo! the burthen was uplifted,
And I pray'd within the chamber where she slumber'd,
And my tears flow'd fast and free, but were not bitter.

I eas'd my heart three days by watching near her,
And made her pillow sweet with scent and flowers,
And could bear at last to put her in the darkness.

And I heard the kirk-bells ringing very slowly,
And the priests were in their vestments, and the earth
Dripp'd awful on the hard wood, yet I bore it.

And I cried, "O unseen Sender of Corruption,
I bless Thee for the wonder of Thy mercy,
Which softeneth the mystery and the parting:

"I bless thee for the change and for the comfort,
The bloomless face, shut eyes, and waxen fingers, —
For Sleeping, and for Silence, and Corruption."

THE FAËRY FOSTER-MOTHER

Bright Eyes, Light Eyes! Daughter of a Fay!
I had not been a wedded wife a twelve-month and a day,
I had not nurs'd my little one a month upon my knee,
When down among the blue-bell banks rose elfins three times three,
They gripp'd me by the raven hair, I could not cry for fear,
They put a hempen rope around my waist and dragg'd me here,
They made me sit and give thee suck as mortal mothers can,
Bright Eyes, Light Eyes! strange and weak and wan!

Dim Face, Grim Face! lie ye there so still?
Thy red, red lips are at my breast, and thou may'st suck thy fill;
But know ye, tho' I hold thee firm, and rock thee to and fro,
'T is not to soothe thee into sleep, but just to still my woe?
And know ye, when I lean so calm against the wall of stone,
'T is when I shut my eyes and try to think thou art mine own?
And know ye, tho' my milk be here, my heart is far away,
Dim Face, Grim Face! Daughter of a Fay!

Gold Hair, Cold Hair! Daughter to a King!
Wrapp'd in bands of snow-white silk with jewels glittering,
Tiny slippers of the gold upon thy feet so thin,
Silver cradle velvet-lin'd for thee to slumber in,
Pygmy pages, crimson-hair'd, to serve thee on their knees,
To fan thy face with ferns and bring thee honey bags of bees, —
I was but a peasant lass, my babe had but the milk,
Gold Hair, Cold Hair! raimented in silk!

Pale Thing, Frail Thing! dumb and weak and thin,
Altho' thou ne'er dost utter sigh thou 'rt shadow'd with a sin;
Thy minnie scorns to suckle thee, thy minnie is an elf,
Upon a bed of rose's-leaves she lies and fans herself;
And though my heart is aching so for one afar from me,
I often look into thy face and drop a tear for thee,
And I am but a peasant born, a lowly cotter's wife,
Pale Thing, Frail Thing! sucking at my life!

Weak Thing, Meek Thing! take no blame from me,
Altho' my babe may moan for lack of what I give to thee;
For though thou art a faëry child, and though thou art my woe,
To feel thee sucking at my breast is all the bliss I know;
It soothes me, tho' afar away I hear my daughter call,
My heart were broken if I felt no little lips at all!
If I had none to tend at all, to be its nurse and slave,
Weak Thing, Meek Thing! I should shriek and rave!

Bright Eyes, Light Eyes! lying on my knee!
If soon I be not taken back unto mine own countree,
To feel my own babe's little lips, as I am feeling thine,
To smooth the golden threads of hair, to see the blue eyes shine, —
I 'll lean my head against the wall and close my weary eyes,
And think my own babe draws the milk with balmy pants and sighs,
And smile and bless my little one and sweetly pass away,
Bright Eyes, Light Eyes! Daughter of a Fay!

THE CHURCHYARD

How slowly creeps the hand of Time
On the old clock's green-mantled face!
Yea, slowly as those ivies climb,
The hours roll round with patient pace;
The drowsy rooks caw on the tower,
The tame doves hover round and round;
Below, the slow grass hour by hour
Makes green God's sleeping-ground.

All moves, but nothing here is swift;
The grass grows deep, the green boughs shoot;
From east to west the shadows drift;
The earth feels heavenward underfoot;
The slow stream through the bridge doth stray
With water-lilies on its marge,
And slowly, pil'd with scented hay,
Creeps by the silent barge.

All stirs, but nothing here is loud:
The cushat broods, the cuckoo cries;
Faint, far up, under a white cloud,
The lark trills soft to earth and skies;
And underneath the green graves rest;
And through the place, with slow footfalls,
With snowy cambric on his breast,
The old gray Vicar crawls.

And close at hand, to see him come,
Clustering at the playground gate,
The urchins of the schoolhouse, dumb
And bashful, hang the head and wait;
The little maidens curtsey deep,
The boys their forelocks touch meanwhile,
The Vicar sees them, half asleep,
And smiles a sleepy smile.

Slow as the hand on the clock's face,
Slow as the white cloud in the sky,
He cometh now with tottering pace
To the old vicarage hard by:

Smother'd it stands in ivy leaves,
  Laurels and yews make dark the ground ;
The swifts that build beneath the eaves
  Wheel in still circles round.

And from the portal, green and dark,
  He glances at the church-clock old —
Gray soul ! why seek his eyes to mark
  The creeping of that finger cold ?
He cannot see, but still as stone
  He pauses, listening for the chime,
And hears from that green tower intone
  The eternal voice of Time.

Emily Pfeiffer

A SONG OF WINTER

Barb'd blossom of the guarded gorse,
  I love thee where I see thee shine :
Thou sweetener of our common-ways,
And brightener of our wintry days.

Flower of the gorse, the rose is dead,
  Thou art undying, O be mine !
Be mine with all thy thorns, and prest
Close on a heart that asks not rest.

I pluck thee and thy stigma set
  Upon my breast and on my brow ;
Blow, buds, and plenish so my wreath
That none may know the wounds beneath.

O crown of thorn that seem'st of gold,
  No festal coronal art thou ;
Thy honey'd blossoms are but hives
That guard the growth of winged lives.

I saw thee in the time of flowers
  As sunshine spill'd upon the land,
Or burning bushes all ablaze
With sacred fire ; but went my ways ;

I went my ways, and as I went
  Pluck'd kindlier blooms on either hand ;
Now of those blooms so passing sweet
None lives to stay my passing feet.

And still thy lamp upon the hill
  Feeds on the autumn's dying sigh,
And from thy midst comes murmuring
A music sweeter than in spring.

Barb'd blossoms of the guarded gorse,
  Be mine to wear until I die,
And mine the wounds of love which still
Bear witness to his human will.

TO A MOTH THAT DRINKETH OF THE RIPE OCTOBER

I

A moth belated, sun and zephyr-kist,
Trembling about a pale arbutus bell,
Probing to wildering depths its honey'd cell, —
A noonday thief, a downy sensualist !
Not vainly, sprite, thou drawest careless breath,
Strikest ambrosia from the cool-cupp'd flowers,
And flutterest through the soft, uncounted hours,
To drop at last in unawaited death ;
'T is something to be glad ! and those fine thrills,
Which move thee, to my lip have drawn the smile
Wherewith we look on joy. Drink ! drown thine ills,
If ill have any part in thee ; erewhile
May the pent force — thy bounded life, set free,
Fill larger sphere with equal ecstasy.

II

With what fine organs art thou dower'd, frail elf !
Thy harp is pitch'd too high for dull annoy,
Thy life a love-feast, and a silent joy,
As mute and rapt as Passion's silent self.
I turn from thee, and see the swallow sweep
Like a wing'd will, and the keen-scented hound
That snuffs with rapture at the tainted ground, —
All things that freely course, that swim or leap, —

Then, hearing glad-voiced creatures men call dumb,
I feel my heart, oft sinking 'neath the weight
Of Nature's sorrow, lighten at the sum
Of Nature's joy; its half-unfolded fate
Breathes hope — for all but those beneath the ban
Of the inquisitor and tyrant, man.

TO THE HERALD HONEYSUCKLE

Deep Honeysuckle! in the silent eve
When wild-rose cups are clos'd, and when each bird
Is sleeping by its mate, then all unheard
The dew's soft kiss thy wakeful lips receive.
'T is then the sighs that throng them seem to weave
A spell whereby the drowsy night is stirr'd
To fervid meanings, which no fullest word
Of speech or song so sweetly could achieve.
Herald of bliss! whose fragrant trumpet blew
Love's title to our hearts ere love was known,
'T was well thy flourish told a tale so true,
Well that Love's dazzling presence was foreshown;
Had his descent on us been as the dew
On thee, our rarer sense he had o'erthrown.

Frederic William Henry Myers

FROM "SAINT PAUL"

Lo, as some bard on isles of the Aegean
Lovely and eager when the earth was young,
Burning to hurl his heart into a paean,
Praise of the hero from whose loins he sprung; —

He, I suppose, with such a care to carry,
Wander'd disconsolate and waited long,
Smiting his breast, wherein the notes would tarry,
Chiding the slumber of the seed of song:

Then in the sudden glory of a minute
Airy and excellent the proem came,
Rending his bosom, for a god was in it,
Waking the seed, for it had burst in flame.

So even I athirst for his inspiring,
I who have talk'd with Him forget again,
Yes, many days with sobs and with desiring
Offer to God a patience and a pain;

Then through the mid complaint of my confession,
Then through the pang and passion of my prayer,
Leaps with a start the shock of his possession,
Thrills me and touches, and the Lord is there.

Lo, if some pen should write upon your rafter
Mene and mene in the folds of flame,
Think you could any memories thereafter
Wholly retrace the couplet as it came?

Lo, if some strange intelligible thunder
Sang to the earth the secret of a star,
Scarce could ye catch, for terror and for wonder,
Shreds of the story that was peal'd so far.

Scarcely I catch the words of his revealing,
Hardly I hear Him, dimly understand,
Only the Power that is within me pealing
Lives on my lips and beckons to my hand.

Whoso has felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:
Yea, with one voice, O world, though thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

Rather the earth shall doubt when her retrieving
Pours in the rain and rushes from the sod,
Rather than he for whom the great conceiving
Stirs in his soul to quicken into God.

Ay, though thou then shouldst strike him from his glory
Blind and tormented, madden'd and alone,
Even on the cross would he maintain his story,
Yes, and in hell would whisper, I have known.

A SONG

THE pouring music, soft and strong,
Some God within her soul has lit,
Her face is rosy with the song
And her gray eyes are sweet with it.

A woman so with singing fir'd,
Has earth a lovelier sight than this?
Oh, he that look'd had soon desir'd
Those lips to fasten with a kiss.

But let not him that race begin
Who seeks not toward its utmost goal;
Give me an hour for drinking in
Her fragrant and her early soul.

To happier hearts I leave the rest,
Who less and more than I shall know,
For me, world-weary, it is best
To listen for an hour and go:

To lift her hand, and press, and part,
And think upon her long and long,
And bear for ever in my heart
The tender traces of a song.

ON A GRAVE AT GRINDELWALD

HERE let us leave him; for his shroud the snow,
For funeral-lamps he has the planets seven,
For a great sign the icy stair shall go
Between the heights to heaven.

One moment stood he as the angels stand,
High in the stainless eminence of air;
The next, he was not, to his fatherland
Translated unaware.

A LAST APPEAL

O SOMEWHERE, somewhere, God unknown,
Exist and be!
I am dying; I am all alone;
I must have thee!

God! God! my sense, my soul, my all,
Dies in the cry:—
Saw'st thou the faint star flame and fall?
Ah! it was I.

IMMORTALITY

So when the old delight is born anew,
And God re-animates the early bliss,
Seems it not all as one first trembling kiss
Ere soul knew soul with whom she has to do?
O nights how desolate, O days how few,
O death in life, if life be this, be this!
O weigh'd alone as one shall win or miss
The faint eternity which shines therethro'!
Lo, all that age is as a speck of sand
Lost on the long beach where the tides are free,
And no man metes it in his hollow hand
Nor cares to ponder it, how small it be;
At ebb it lies forgotten on the land
And at full tide forgotten in the sea.

A LETTER FROM NEWPORT

φαίη κ' ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀγήρως ἔμμεναι αἰεὶ
ὃς τότ' ἐπαντιάσειἐ ὅτ' Ἰάονες ἄθροοι εἶεν.

THE crimson leafage fires the lawn,
The pil'd hydrangeas blazing glow;
How blue the vault of breezy dawn
Illumes the Atlantic's crested snow!
'Twixt sea and sands how fair to ride
Through whispering airs a starlit way,
And watch those flashing towers divide
Heaven's darkness from the darkling bay!

Ah, friend, how vain their pedant's part,
Their hurrying toils how idly spent,
How have they wrong'd the gentler heart
Which thrills the awakening continent,
Who have not learnt on this bright shore
What sweetness issues from the strong,
Where flowerless forest, cataract-roar,
Have found a blossom and a song!

Ah, what imperial force of fate
  Links our one race in high emprize!
Nor aught henceforth can separate
  Those glories mingling as they rise;
For one in heart, as one in speech,
  At last have Child and Mother grown, —
Fair Figures! honoring each in each
  A beauty kindred with her own.

Through English eyes more calmly soft
  Looks from gray deeps the appealing charm;
Reddens on English cheeks more oft
  The rose of innocent alarm; —
Our old-world heart more gravely feels,
  Has learnt more force, more self-control;
For us through sterner music peals
  The full accord of soul and soul.

But ah, the life, the smile untaught,
  The floating presence feathery-fair!
The eyes and aspect that have caught
  The brilliance of Columbian air!
No oriole through the forest flits
  More sheeny-plum'd, more gay and free;
On no nymph's marble forehead sits
  Proudlier a glad virginity.

So once the Egyptian, gravely bold,
  Wander'd the Ionian folk among.
Heard from their high Letôon roll'd
  That song the Delian maidens sung;
Danced in his eyes the dazzling gold,
  For with his voice the tears had sprung, —
"They die not, these! they wax not old,
  They are ever-living, ever-young!"

Spread then, great land! thine arms afar,
  Thy golden harvest westward roll;
Banner with banner, star with star,
  Ally the tropics and the pole; —
There glows no gem than these more bright
  From ice to fire, from sea to sea;
Blossoms no fairer flower to light
  Through all thine endless empery.

And thou come hither, friend! thou too
  Their kingdom enter as a boy;
Fed with their glorious youth renew
  Thy dimm'd prerogative of joy: —
Come with small question, little thought,
  Through thy worn veins what pulse shall flow,
With what regrets, what fancies fraught,
  Shall silver-footed summer go: —

If round one fairest face shall meet
  Those many dreams of many fair,
And wandering homage seek the feet
  Of one sweet queen, and linger there;
Or if strange winds betwixt be driven,
  Unvoyageable oceans foam,
Nor this new earth, this airy heaven,
  For thy sad heart can find a home.

I SAW, I SAW THE LOVELY CHILD

I saw, I saw the lovely child,
  I watch'd her by the way,
I learnt her gestures sweet and wild,
  Her loving eyes and gay.

Her name? — I heard not, nay, nor care;
  Enough it was for me
To find her innocently fair
  And delicately free.

Oh, cease and go ere dreams be done,
  Nor trace the angel's birth,
Nor find the Paradisal one
  A blossom of the earth!

Thus is it with our subtlest joys, —
  How quick the soul's alarm!
How lightly deed or word destroys
  That evanescent charm!

It comes unbidden, comes unbought,
  Unfetter'd flees away;
His swiftest and his sweetest thought
  Can never poet say.

Edward Dowden

RENUNCIANTS

Seems not our breathing light?
  Sound not our voices free?
Bid to Life's festal bright
  No gladder guests there be.

Ah stranger, lay aside
  Cold prudence! I divine
The secret you would hide,
  And you conjecture mine.

You too have temperate eyes,
  Have put your heart to school,
Are prov'd. I recognize
  A brother of the rule.

I knew it by your lip,
  A something when you smil'd,
Which meant "close scholarship,
  A master of the guild."

Well, and how good is life ;
  Good to be born, have breath,
The calms good, and the strife,
  Good life, and perfect death.

Come, for the dancers wheel,
  Join we the pleasant din, —
Comrade, it serves to feel
  The sackcloth next the skin.

LEONARDO'S "MONNA LISA"

MAKE thyself known, Sibyl, or let despair
Of knowing thee be absolute : I wait
Hour-long and waste a soul. What word of fate
Hides 'twixt the lips which smile and still forbear ?
Secret perfection ! Mystery too fair !
Tangle the sense no more, lest I should hate
The delicate tyranny, the inviolate
Poise of thy folded hands, the fallen hair.
Nay, nay, — I wrong thee with rough words; still be
Serene, victorious, inaccessible ;
Still smile but speak not ; lightest irony
Lurk ever 'neath thy eyelids' shadow ; still
O'ertop our knowledge ; Sphinx of Italy,
Allure us and reject us at thy will !

TWO INFINITIES

A LONELY way, and as I went my eyes
Could not unfasten from the Spring's sweet things,
Lush-sprouted grass, and all that climbs and clings
In loose, deep hedges, where the primrose lies
In her own fairness, buried blooms surprise
The plunderer bee and stop his murmurings,
And the glad flutter of a finch's wings
Outstartle small blue-speckled butterflies.
Blissfully did one speedwell plot beguile
My whole heart long ; I lov'd each separate flower,
Kneeling. I look'd up suddenly — Dear God !
There stretch'd the shining plain for many a mile,
The mountains rose with what invincible power !
And how the sky was fathomless and broad !

Margaret Veley

FIRST OR LAST?

A WIFE TO HER HUSBAND

MY life ebbs from me — I must die.
Must die — it has a ghostly sound,
A far-off thunder drawing nigh,
An echo as from underground.
Yes, I must die who fain would live ;
You cannot give me life — alas !
Dear Love of mine, you can but give
One latest kiss before I pass.

Dear, we have had our summer bliss,
Kisses on cheek, and lip, and brow,
But soul to soul, as now we kiss,
I think we never kiss'd till now.
Give both your hands, and let the earth
Roll onward — let what will befall.
This is an hour of wondrous birth,
And can it be the end of all ?

Ah, your sad face ! I know you think
(Clasp me, O love, your faith is mine,
Only my weakness made me shrink)
That I am standing on the brink
Of night where never dawn will shine,
Of slumber whence I shall not wake,
Of darkness where no life will grope ;
I know your hopeless creed, and take
My part therein for your dear sake, —
We stand asunder if I hope.

And yet I dream'd of a fair land
Where you and I were met at last,
And face to face, and hand in hand,
Smil'd at the sorrow overpast.
The eastern sky was touch'd with fire,
In the dim woodlands cooed the dove,
Earth waited, tense with strong desire,
For day — your coming, O my love !
The breeze awoke to breathe your name,
And through the leafy maze I came
With feet that could not turn aside,
With eyes that would not be denied —
My lips, my heart a rosy flame,
Because you kiss'd me ere I died.
Death could but part us for a while ;
Beyond the boundary of years
We met again — oh, do not smile
That tender smile, more sad than tears !

Forget my vision sweet and vain,
Your faith is mine — your faith is best ;
Let others count the joys they gain,
I am a thousand times more blest.
They can but give a scanty dole
Out of a life made safe in heaven,
While I am sovereign o'er the whole,
I can give all — and all is given !
Faith such as ours defies the grave,
Nor needs a dream of bliss above —
Shall not this moment make me brave ?
O aloe-flower of perfect love !

What though the end of all be come,
The latest hour, the latest breath,
This is life's triumph, and its sum,
The aloe-flower of love and death !

And yet your kisses wake a life
That throbs in anguish through my heart,
Leads up to wage despairing strife,
And shudders, loathing to depart.
Can such desire be born in vain,
Crush'd by inevitable doom ?
While you let live can Love be slain ?
Can Love lie dead within my tomb ?
And when you die — that hopeless day
When darkness comes and utmost need,
And I am dead and cold, you say,
Will Death have power to hold his prey ?
Shall I not know ? Shall I not heed ?
When your last sun, with waning light,
Below the sad horizon dips,
Shall I not rush from out the night
To die once more upon your lips ?

Ah, the black moment comes ! Draw nigh,
Stoop down, O Love, and hold me fast.
O empty earth ! O empty sky !
There is no answer, though I die
Breathing my soul out in the cry,
Is it the first kiss — or the last ?

Lady Currie

("VIOLET FANE")

A MAY SONG

A LITTLE while my love and I,
Before the mowing of the hay,
Twin'd daisy-chains and cowslip-balls,
And caroll'd glees and madrigals,
Before the hay, beneath the may,
My love (who lov'd me then) and I.

For long years now my love and I
Tread sever'd paths to varied ends ;
We sometimes meet, and sometimes say
The trivial things of every day,
And meet as comrades, meet as friends,
My love (who lov'd me once) and I.

But never more my love and I
Will wander forth, as once, together,
Or sing the songs we us'd to sing
In spring-time, in the cloudless weather ;
Some chord is mute that us'd to ring,
Some word forgot we us'd to say
Amongst the may, before the hay,
My love (who loves me not) and I.

A FOREBODING

I DO not dread an alter'd heart,
Or that long line of land or sea
Should separate my love from me,
I dread that drifting slow apart —
All unresisted, unrestrain'd —
Which comes to some when they have gain'd
The dear endeavor of their soul.

As two light skiffs that sail'd together,
Through days and nights of tranquil weather,
Adown some inland stream, might be
Drifted asunder, each from each;
When, floating with the tide, they reach
The hop'd-for end, the promis'd goal,
The sudden glory of the sea.

IN GREEN OLD GARDENS

In green old gardens, hidden away
From sight of revel and sound of strife,
Where the bird may sing out his soul ere he dies,
Nor fears for the night, so he lives his day;
Where the high red walls, which are growing gray
With their lichen and moss embroideries,
Seem sadly and sternly to shut out Life,
Because it is often as sad as they;

Where even the bee has time to glide
(Gathering gayly his honey'd store)
Right to the heart of the old-world flowers, —
China-asters and purple stocks,
Dahlias and tall red hollyhocks,
Laburnums raining their golden showers,
Columbines prim of the folded core,
And lupins, and larkspurs, and "London pride";

Where the heron is waiting amongst the reeds,
Grown tame in the silence that reigns around,
Broken only, now and then,
By shy woodpecker or noisy jay,
By the far-off watch-dog's muffled bay;
But where never the purposeless laughter of men,
Or the seething city's murmurous sound
Will float up under the river-weeds.

Here may I live what life I please,
Married and buried out of sight, —
Married to pleasure, and buried to pain, —
Hidden away amongst scenes like these,
Under the fans of the chestnut trees;
Living my child-life over again,
With the further hope of a fuller delight,
Blithe as the birds and wise as the bees.

In green old gardens hidden away
From sight of revel and sound of strife, —
Here have I leisure to breathe and move,
And to do my work in a nobler way;
To sing my songs, and to say my say;
To dream my dreams, and to love my love;
To hold my faith, and to live my life,
Making the most of its shadowy day.

AFTERWARDS

I know that these poor rags of womanhood, —
This oaten pipe, whereon the wild winds play'd
Making sad music, — tatter'd and outfray'd,
Cast off, play'd out, — can hold no more of good,
Of love, or song, or sense of sun and shade.

What homely neighbors elbow me (hard by
'Neath the black yews) I know I shall not know,
Nor take account of changing winds that blow,
Shifting the golden arrow, set on high
On the gray spire, nor mark who come and go.

Yet would I lie in some familiar place,
Nor share my rest with uncongenial dead, —
Somewhere, maybe, where friendly feet will tread, —
As if from out some little chink of space
Mine eyes might see them tripping overhead.

And though too sweet to deck a sepulchre
Seem twinkling daisy-buds, and meadow grass;
And so, would more than serve me, lest they pass
Who fain would know what woman rested there,
What her demeanor, or her story was,—

For these I would that on a sculptur'd stone
(Fenced round with ironwork to keep secure)
Should sleep a form with folded palms demure,
In aspect like the dreamer that was gone,
With these words carv'd, "*I hop'd, but was not sure.*"

Samuel Waddington

THE INN OF CARE

At Nebra, by the Unstrut, —
So travellers declare, —
There stands an ancient tavern,
It is the "Inn of Care."
To all the world 't is open ;
It sets a goodly fare ;
And every soul is welcome
That deigns to sojourn there.

The landlord with his helpers,
(He is a stalwart host),
To please his guest still labors
With "bouilli" and with "roast ;"
And ho ! he laughs so roundly,
He laughs, and loves to boast
That he who bears the beaker
May live to share the "toast."

Lucus a non lucendo —
Thus named might seem the inn,
So careless is its laughter,
So loud its merry din ;
Yet ere to doubt its title
You do, in sooth, begin,
Go, watch the pallid faces
Approach and pass within.

To Nebra, by the Unstrut,
May all the world repair,
And meet a hearty welcome,
And share a goodly fare ;
The world ! 't is worn and weary —
'T is tir'd of gilt and glare ;
The inn ! 't is nam'd full wisely,
It is the "Inn of Care."

SOUL AND BODY

Where wert thou, Soul, ere yet my body born
Became thy dwelling-place ? Didst thou on earth,
Or in the clouds, await this body's birth ?
Or by what chance upon that winter's morn
Didst thou this body find, a babe forlorn ?
Didst thou in sorrow enter, or in mirth ?
Or for a jest, perchance, to try its worth
Thou tookest flesh, ne'er from it to be torn ?
Nay, Soul, I will not mock thee ; well I know
Thou wert not on the earth, nor in the sky ;
For with my body's growth thou too didst grow ;
But with that body's death wilt thou too die ?
I know not, and thou canst not tell me, so
In doubt we 'll go together, — thou and I.

Ernest Myers

GORDON

I

On through the Libyan sand
Rolls ever, mile on mile,
League on long league, cleaving the rainless land,
Fed by no friendly wave, the immemorial Nile.

II

Down through the cloudless air,
Undimm'd, from heaven's sheer height,
Bend their inscrutable gaze, austere and bare,
In long-proceeding pomp, the stars of Libyan night.

III

Beneath the stars, beside the unpausing flood,
Earth trembles at the wandering lion's roar ;
Trembles again, when in blind thirst of blood
Sweep the wild tribes along the startled shore.

IV

They sweep and surge and struggle, and are gone :
The mournful desert silence reigns again,
The immemorial River rolleth on,
The order'd stars gaze blank upon the plain.

V

O awful Presence of the lonely Nile,
O awful Presence of the starry sky,
Lo, in this little while
Unto the mind's true-seeing inward eye
There hath arisen there
Another haunting Presence as sublime,
As great, as sternly fair ;
Yea, rather fairer far
Than stream, or sky, or star,
To live while star shall burn or river roll,
Unmarr'd by marring Time,
The crown of Being, a heroic soul.

VI

Beyond the weltering tides of worldly change
He saw the invisible things,
The eternal Forms of Beauty and of Right ;
Wherewith well pleas'd his spirit wont to range,
Rapt with divine delight,
Richer than empires, royaler than kings.

VII

Lover of children, lord of fiery fight,
Saviour of empires, servant of the poor,
Not in the sordid scales of earth, unsure,
Deprav'd, adulterate,
He measur'd small and great,
But by some righteous balance wrought in heaven,
To his pure hand by Powers empyreal given ;
Therewith, by men unmov'd, as God he judged aright.

VIII

As on the broad sweet-water'd river tost
Falls some poor grain of salt,
And melts to naught, nor leaves embittering trace ;
As in the o'er-arching vault
With unrepell'd assault
A cloudy climbing vapor, lightly lost,
Vanisheth utterly in the starry space ;
So from our thought, when his enthron'd estate
We inly contemplate,
All wrangling phantoms fade, and leave us face to face.

IX

Dwell in us, sacred spirit, as in thee
Dwelt the eternal Love, the eternal Life,
Nor dwelt in only thee ; not thee alone
We honor reverently,
But in thee all who in some succoring strife,
By day or dark, world-witness'd or unknown,
Crush'd by the crowd, or in late harvest hail'd,
Warring thy war have triumph'd, or have fail'd.

X

Nay, but not only there
Broods thy great Presence, o'er the Libyan plain.
It haunts a kindlier clime, a dearer air,
The liberal air of England, thy lov'd home.
Thou through her sunlit clouds and flying rain
Breathe, and all winds that sweep her island shore —
Rough fields of riven foam,
Where in stern watch her guardian breakers roar.
Ay, thron'd with all her mighty memories,
Wherefrom her nobler sons their nurture draw,
With all of good or great
For aye incorporate
That rears her race to faith and generous shame,
To high-aspiring awe,
To hate implacable of thick-thronging lies,
To scorn of gold and gauds and clamorous fame ;

With all we guard most dear and most divine,
All records rank'd with thine,
Here be thy home, brave soul, thy undecaying shrine.

ETSI OMNES, EGO NON

HERE where under earth his head
Finds a last and lonely bed,
Let him speak upon the stone :
Etsi omnes, ego non.

Here he shall not know the eyes
Bent upon their sordid prize
Earthward ever, nor the beat
Of the hurrying faithless feet.

None to make him perfect cheer
Join'd him on his journey drear ;
Some too soon, who fell away ;
Some too late, who mourn to-day.

Yet while comrades one by one
Made denial and were gone,
Not the less he labor'd on :
Etsi omnes, ego non.

Surely his were heart and mind
Meet for converse with his kind,
Light of genial fancy free,
Grace of sweetest sympathy.

But his soul had other scope,
Holden of a larger hope,
Larger hope and larger love.
Meat to eat men knew not of :

Knew not, know not — yet shall sound
From this place of holy ground
Even this legend thereupon,
Etsi omnes, ego non.

"THE SEA-MAIDS' MUSIC"

ONE moment the boy, as he wander'd by night
Where the far-spreading foam in the moonbeam was white,
One moment he caught on the breath of the breeze
The voice of the sisters that sing in the seas.

One moment, no more : though the boy linger'd long,
No more might he hear of the mermaidens' song,
But the pine-woods behind him moan'd low from the land,
And the ripple gush'd soft at his feet on the sand.

Yet or ever they ceas'd, the strange sound of their joy
Had lighted a light in the breast of the boy :
And the seeds of a wonder, a splendor to be
Had been breath'd through his soul from the songs of the sea.

George Francis Savage-Armstrong

AUTUMN MEMORIES

WHEN russet beech-leaves drift in air,
And withering bracken gilds the ling,
And red haws brighten hedgerows bare,
And only plaintive robins sing ;
When autumn whirlwinds curl the sea,
And mountain-tops are cold with haze,
Then saddest thoughts revisit me, —
I sit and dream of the olden days.

When chestnut-leaves lie yellow on ground,
And brown nuts break the prickled husk,
And nests on naked boughs are found,
And swallows shrill no more at dusk,
And folks are glad in house to be,
And up the flue the faggots blaze,
Then climb my little boys my knee
To hear me tell of the olden days.

THE MYSTERY

YEAR after year
The leaf and the shoot ;
The babe and the nestling,
The worm at the root ;
The bride at the altar,
The corpse on the bier —
The Earth and its story,
Year after year.

Whither are tending,
And whence do they rise,
The cycles of changes,
The worlds in their skies,
The seasons that roll'd
Ere I flash'd from the gloom,
And will roll on as now
When I'm dust in the tomb?

ONE IN THE INFINITE

Roll on, and with thy rolling crust
That round thy poles thou twirlest,
Roll with thee, Earth, this grain of dust,
As through the Vast thou whirlest;
On, on through zones of dark and light
Still waft me, blind and reeling,
Around the sun, and with his flight
In wilder orbits wheeling.

Speed on through deeps without a shore,
This Atom with thee bearing,
Thyself a grain of dust — no more —
'Mid fume of systems flaring.
Ah, what am I to thirst for power,
Or pore on Nature's pages, —
Whirl'd onward, living for an hour,
And dead through endless ages?

MY GUIDE

She leads me on through storm and calm,
My glorious Angel girt with light;
By dazzling isles of tropic balm,
By coasts of ice in northern night.
Now far amid the mountain shades
Her footprints gleam like golden fire,
And now adown the leafy glades
I chase the music of her lyre.

And now amid the tangled pines
That darkly robe the gorgeous steep
She beckons where in woven lines
The sunbeams through the darkness creep,
And shows in glimpses far below
The champaign stretching leagues away,
Fair cities veil'd in summer's glow
Or sparkling in the cloudless ray.

At times on seas with tempest loud,
The pilot of my bark, she stands,
And, through the rifts of driving cloud,
To tranquil bays of bounteous lands,
The grassy creek, the bowery shore,
The fringe of many a charmed realm,
She steers me safe by magic lore,
Her white arm leaning on the helm.

When, sick at heart and worn, mine eyes
I bend to earth in long despair,
She lifts her finger to the skies,
The violet deeps of lucid air,
The myriad myriad orbs that roll
In endless throngs in living space,
And all the vision of her soul
Is mirror'd in her radiant face.

"THE FATHER"

If it were only a dream,
Were it not good to cherish,
Seeing to lose its beam
Is in despair to perish —
Maker and Father and Friend,
Yearning in pity to guide me,
Leading me on to the end,
Ever in love beside me,
Never in storm or gloom
Deaf to a cry of sorrow,
Kindling beyond the tomb
Light of an endless morrow?

Yea, if 't were only a dream,
Better it were to clasp it,
Brood on it until it seem
Real as the lives that grasp it.
Helpless, feeble, and lost,
Groping in Wisdom's traces,
Whirl'd like a leaf, and tost
Out in the awful spaces, —
Oh, how the heart betray'd
Bounds, into life upleaping,
Trusting that He who made
Watch over all is keeping!

James Chapman Woods

THE SOUL STITHY

My soul, asleep between its body-throes,
Mid leagues of darkness watch'd a furnace glare,
And breastless arms that wrought laborious there, —
Power without plan, wherefrom no purpose grows, —
Welding white metal on a forge with blows,
Whence stream'd the singing sparks like flaming hair,
Which whirling gusts ever abroad would bear :
And still the stithy hammers fell and rose.
And then I knew those sparks were souls of men,
And watch'd them driven like starlets down the wind.
A myriad died and left no trace to tell ;
An hour like will-o'-the-wisps some lit the fen ;
Now one would leave a trail of fire behind :
And still the stithy-hammers rose and fell.

THE WORLD'S DEATH-NIGHT

I think a stormless night-time shall ensue
Unto the world, yearning for hours of calm :
Not these the end, — nor sudden-closing palm
Of a God's hand beneath the skies we knew,
Nor fall from a fierce heaven of fiery dew
In plaee of the sweet dewfall, the world's balm,
Nor swell of elemental triumph-psalm
Round the long-buffeted bulk, rent through and through.
But in the even of its endless night,
With shoreless floods of moonlight on its breast,
And baths of healing mist about its scars,
An instant sums its circling years of flight,
And the tir'd earth hangs crystall'd into rest,
Girdled with gracious watchings of the stars.

BALLADISTS AND LYRISTS

Louisa Macartney Crawford

KATHLEEN MAVOURNEEN

Kathleen Mavourneen ! the gray dawn is breaking,
The horn of the hunter is heard on the hill;
The lark from her light wing the bright dew is shaking, —
Kathleen Mavourneen ! what, slumbering still ?
Oh, hast thou forgotten how soon we must sever ?
Oh ! hast thou forgotten this day we must part ?
It may be for years, and it may be forever !
Oh, why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart ?
Oh ! why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen ?

Kathleen Mavourneen, awake from thy slumbers !
The blue mountains glow in the sun's golden light ;
Ah, where is the spell that once hung on my numbers ?
Arise in thy beauty, thou star of my night !
Mavourneen, Mavourneen, my sad tears are falling,
To think that from Erin and thee I must part !
It may be for years, and it may be forever !
Then why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart ?
Then why art thou silent, Kathleen Mavourneen ?

Sir Francis Hastings Doyle

THE OLD CAVALIER

"For our martyr'd Charles I pawn'd my plate,
For his son I spent my all,
That a churl might dine, and drink my wine,
And preach in my father's hall:
That father died on Marston Moor,
My son on Worcester plain;
But the king he turn'd his back on me
When he got his own again.

"The other day, there came, God wot!
A solemn, pompous ass,
Who begged to know if I did not go
To the sacrifice of Mass:
I told him fairly to his face,
That in the field of fight
I had shouted loud for Church and King,
When he would have run outright.

"He talk'd of the Man of Babylon
With his rosaries and copes,
As if a Roundhead was n't worse
Than half a hundred Popes.
I don't know what the people mean,
With their horror and affright;
All Papists that I ever knew
Fought stoutly for the right.

"I now am poor and lonely,
This cloak is worn and old,
But yet it warms my loyal heart,
Through sleet, and rain, and cold,
When I call to mind the Cavaliers,
Bold Rupert at their head,
Bursting through blood and fire, with cries
That might have wak'd the dead.

"Then spur and sword was the battle word,
And we made their helmets ring,
Howling like madmen, all the while,
For God and for the King.
And though they snuffled psalms, to give
The Rebel-dogs their due,
When the roaring shot pour'd close and hot
They were stalwart men and true.

"On the fatal field of Naseby,
Where Rupert lost the day
By hanging on the flying crowd
Like a lion on his prey,
I stood and fought it out, until,
In spite of plate and steel,
The blood that left my veins that day
Flow'd up above my heel.

"And certainly, it made those quail
Who never quail'd before,
To look upon the awful front
Which Cromwell's horsemen wore.
I felt that every hope was gone,
When I saw their squadrons form,
And gather for the final charge
Like the coming of the storm.

"Oh! where was Rupert in that hour
Of danger, toil, and strife?
It would have been to all brave men
Worth a hundred years of life
To have seen that black and gloomy force,
As it poured down in line,
Met midway by the Royal horse
And Rupert of the Rhine.

"All this is over now, and I
Must travel to the tomb,
Though the king I serv'd has got his own,
In poverty and gloom.
Well, well, I serv'd him for himself,
So I must not now complain,
But I often wish that I had died
With my son on Worcester plain."

THE PRIVATE OF THE BUFFS

Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaff'd, and swore:
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never look'd before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador from Britain's crown,
And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewilder'd, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.
Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame:
He only knows, that not through him
Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hop-fields round him seem'd,
  Like dreams, to come and go ;
Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleam'd,
  One sheet of living snow ;
The smoke, above his father's door,
  In gray soft eddyings hung :
Must he then watch it rise no more,
  Doom'd by himself, so young ?

Yes, honor calls ! — with strength like steel
  He put the vision by.
Let dusky Indians whine and kneel ;
  An English lad must die.

And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
  With knee to man unbent,
Unfaltering on its dreadful brink,
  To his red grave he went.

Vain, mightiest fleets, of iron fram'd ;
  Vain, those all-shattering guns ;
Unless proud England keep, untam'd,
  The strong heart of her sons.
So, let his name through Europe ring —
  A man of mean estate,
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
  Because his soul was great.

William Makepeace Thackeray

AT THE CHURCH GATE

ALTHOUGH I enter not,
Yet round about the spot
  Ofttimes I hover ;
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
  Expectant of her.

The minster bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
  And noise and humming ;
They 've hush'd the minster bell :
The organ 'gins to swell ;
  She 's coming, she 's coming !

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast
  And hastening thither,
With modest eyes downcast ;
She comes — she 's here, she 's past !
  May heaven go with her !

Kneel undisturb'd, fair saint !
Pour out your praise or plaint
  Meekly and duly ;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer
  With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
  Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits, who wait,
And see, through heaven's gate,
  Angels within it.

THE BALLAD OF BOUILLABAISSE

A STREET there is in Paris famous,
  For which no rhyme our language yields,
Rue Neuve des petits Champs its name is —
  The New Street of the Little Fields ;
And there 's an inn, not rich and splendid,
  But still in comfortable case —
The which in youth I oft attended,
  To eat a bowl of Bouillabaisse.

This Bouillabaisse a noble dish is —
  A sort of soup, or broth, or brew,
Or hotchpotch of all sorts of fishes,
  That Greenwich never could outdo ;
Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffern,
  Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace ;
All these you eat at Terré's tavern,
  In that one dish of Bouillabaisse.

Indeed, a rich and savory stew 't is ;
  And true philosophers, methinks,
Who love all sorts of natural beauties,
  Should love good victuals and good drinks.
And Cordelier or Benedictine
  Might gladly, sure, his lot embrace,
Nor find a fast-day too afflicting,
  Which served him up a Bouillabaisse.

I wonder if the house still there is ?
  Yes, here the lamp is as before ;
The smiling, red-cheeked écaillère is
  Still opening oysters at the door.

Is Terré still alive and able?
  I recollect his droll grimace;
He 'd come and smile before your table,
  And hop'd you lik'd your Bouillabaisse.

We enter; nothing 's changed or older.
  "How 's Monsieur Terré, waiter, pray?"
The waiter stares and shrugs his shoulder;—
  "Monsieur is dead this many a day."
"It is the lot of saint and sinner.
  So honest Terré 's run his race!"
"What will Monsieur require for dinner?"
  "Say, do you still cook Bouillabaisse?"

"Oh, oui, Monsieur," 's the waiter's answer;
  "Quel vin Monsieur désire-t-il?"
"Tell me a good one." "That I can, sir;
  The Chambertin with yellow seal."
"So Terré 's gone," I say and sink in
  My old accustom'd corner-place;
"He 's done with feasting and with drinking,
  With Burgundy and Bouillabaisse."

My old accustom'd corner here is —
  The table still is in the nook;
Ah! vanish'd many a busy year is,
  This well-known chair since last I took.
When first I saw ye, *Cari luoghi*,
  I 'd scarce a beard upon my face,
And now a grizzled, grim old fogy,
  I sit and wait for Bouillabaisse.

Where are you, old companions trusty
  Of early days, here met to dine?
Come, waiter! quick, a flagon crusty —
  I 'll pledge them in the good old wine.
The kind old voices and old faces
  My memory can quick retrace;
Around the board they take their places,
  And share the wine and Bouillabaisse.

There 's Jack has made a wondrous marriage;
  There 's laughing Tom is laughing yet;
There 's brave Augustus drives his carriage;
  There 's poor old Fred in the Gazette;
On James's head the grass is growing:
  Good Lord! the world has wagg'd apace
Since here we set the Claret flowing,
  And drank, and ate the Bouillabaisse.

Ah me! how quick the days are flitting!
  I mind me of a time that 's gone,
When here I 'd sit, as now I 'm sitting,
  In this same place — but not alone.
A fair young form was nestled near me,
  A dear, dear face look'd fondly up,
And sweetly spoke and smil'd to cheer me.
  — There 's no one now to share my cup.

. . . . . .

I drink it as the Fates ordain it.
  Come, fill it, and have done with rhymes;
Fill up the lonely glass, and drain it
  In memory of dear old times.
Welcome the wine, whate'er the seal is;
  And sit you down and say your grace
With thankful heart, whate'er the meal is.
  —Here comes the smoking Bouillabaisse!

THE AGE OF WISDOM

Ho! pretty page, with the dimpled chin,
  That never has known the barber's shear,
All your wish is woman to win;
This is the way that boys begin:
  Wait till you come to forty year.

Curly gold locks cover foolish brains;
  Billing and cooing is all your cheer —
Sighing, and singing of midnight strains,
Under Bonnybell's window panes:
  Wait till you come to forty year.

Forty times over let Michaelmas pass;
  Grizzling hair the brain doth clear;
Then you know a boy is an ass,
Then you know the worth of a lass,
  Once you have come to forty year.

Pledge me round; I bid ye declare,
  All good fellows whose beards are gray,
Did not the fairest of the fair
Common grow and wearisome ere
  Ever a month was pass'd away?

The reddest lips that ever have kiss'd,
  The brightest eyes that ever have shone,
May pray and whisper and we not list,
Or look away and never be miss'd,
  Ere yet ever a month is gone.

Gillian 's dead! God rest her bier —
  How I loved her twenty years syne!
Marian 's married; but I sit here,
Alone and merry at forty year,
  Dipping my nose in the Gascon wine.

SORROWS OF WERTHER

WERTHER had a love for Charlotte
Such as words could never utter ;
Would you know how first he met her ?
She was cutting bread and butter.

Charlotte was a married lady,
And a moral man was Werther,
And for all the wealth of Indies
Would do nothing for to hurt her.

So he sigh'd and pin'd and ogled,
And his passion boil'd and bubbled,
Till he blew his silly brains out,
And no more was by it troubled.

Charlotte, having seen his body
Borne before her on a shutter,
Like a well-conducted person,
Went on cutting bread and butter.

THE PEN AND THE ALBUM

"I AM Miss Catherine's book" (the Album speaks) ;
"I've lain among your tomes these many weeks ;
I'm tir'd of your old coats and yellow cheeks.

"Quick, Pen ! and write a line with a good grace ;
Come ! draw me off a funny little face ;
And, prithee, send me back to Chesham Place."

PEN

I am my master's faithful old Gold Pen;
I've serv'd him three long years, and drawn since then
Thousands of funny women and droll men.

O Album ! could I tell you all his ways
And thoughts, since I am his, these thousand days,
Lord, how your pretty pages I'd amaze !

ALBUM

His ways ? his thoughts ? Just whisper me a few ;
Tell me a curious anecdote or two,
And write 'em quickly off, good Mordan, do !

PEN

Since he my faithful service did engage
To follow him through his queer pilgrimage,
I've drawn and written many a line and page.

Caricatures I scribbled have, and rhymes,
And dinner cards, and picture pantomimes,
And merry little children's books at times.

I've writ the foolish fancy of his brain ;
The aimless jest that, striking, hath caus'd pain ;
The idle word that he'd wish back again.

I've help'd him to pen many a line for bread ;
To joke, with sorrow aching in his head ;
And make your laughter when his own heart bled.

I've spoke with men of all degree and sort —
Peers of the land, and ladies of the Court ;
O, but I've chonicled a deal of sport.

Feasts that were ate a thousand days ago,
Biddings to wine that long hath ceas'd to flow,
Gay meetings with good fellows long laid low ;

Summons to bridal, banquet, burial, ball,
Tradesman's polite reminders of his small
Account due Christmas last — I've answer'd all.

Poor Diddler's tenth petition for a half
Guinea ; Miss Bunyan's for an autograph ;
So I refuse, accept, lament, or laugh,

Condole, congratulate, invite, praise, scoff,
Day after day still dipping in my trough,
And scribbling pages after pages off.

Day after day the labor 's to be done,
And sure as comes the postman and the sun,
The indefatigable ink must run.

. . . . . .

Go back, my pretty little gilded tome,
To a fair mistress and a pleasant home,
Where soft hearts greet us whensoe'er we come.

Dear, friendly eyes, with constant kindness
lit,
However rude my verse, or poor my wit,
Or sad or gay my mood, you welcome it.

Kind lady! till my last of lines is penn'd,
My master's love, grief, laughter, at an end,
Whene'er I write your name, may I write
friend!

Not all are so that were so in past years;
Voices, familiar once, no more he hears;
Names, often writ, are blotted out in tears.

So be it: — joys will end and tears will
dry —
Album! my master bids me wish good-
by;
He 'll send you to your mistress presently.

And thus with thankful heart he closes
you;
Blessing the happy hour when a friend he
knew
So gentle, and so generous, and so true.

Nor pass the words as idle phrases by;
Stranger! I never writ a flattery,
Nor sign'd the page that register'd a lie.

THE MAHOGANY TREE

Christmas is here;
Winds whistle shrill,
Icy and chill,
Little care we;
Little we fear
Weather without,
Shelter'd about
The Mahogany Tree.

Once on the boughs
Birds of rare plume
Sang, in its bloom;
Night birds are we;
Here we carouse,
Singing, like them,
Perch'd round the stem
Of the jolly old tree.

Here let us sport,
Boys, as we sit —
Laughter and wit
Flashing so free.

Life is but short —
When we are gone,
Let them sing on,
Round the old tree.

Evenings we knew,
Happy as this;
Faces we miss,
Pleasant to see.
Kind hearts and true,
Gentle and just,
Peace to your dust!
We sing round the tree.

Care, like a dun,
Lurks at the gate:
Let the dog wait;
Happy we 'll be!
Drink every one;
Pile up the coals,
Fill the red bowls,
Round the old tree.

Drain we the cup. —
Friend, art afraid?
Spirits are laid
In the Red Sea.
Mantle it up;
Empty it yet;
Let us forget,
Round the old tree.

Sorrows, begone!
Life and its ills,
Duns and their bills,
Bid we to flee.
Come with the dawn,
Blue-devil sprite,
Leave us to-night,
Round the old tree.

THE END OF THE PLAY

The play is done — the curtain drops,
Slow falling to the prompter's bell;
A moment yet the actor stops,
And looks around, to say farewell.
It is an irksome word and task;
And, when he 's laugh'd and said his say,
He shows, as he removes the mask,
A face that 's anything but gay.

One word, ere yet the evening ends:
Let 's close it with a parting rhyme,

And pledge a hand to all young friends,
  As fits the merry Christmas time ;
On life's wide scene you, too, have parts,
  That fate ere long shall bid you play ;
Good-night ! — with honest gentle hearts
  A kindly greeting go alway !

Good-night ! — I 'd say the griefs, the joys,
  Just hinted in this mimic page,
The triumphs and defeats of boys,
  Are but repeated in our age ;
I 'd say your woes were not less keen,
  Your hopes more vain, than those of men,
Your pangs or pleasures of fifteen
  At forty-five played o'er again.

I 'd say we suffer and we strive
  Not less nor more as men than boys,
With grizzled beards at forty-five,
  As erst at twelve in corduroys,
And if, in time of sacred youth,
  We learn'd at home to love and pray,
Pray heaven that early love and truth
  May never wholly pass away.

And in the world, as in the school,
  I 'd say how fate may change and shift,
The prize be sometimes with the fool,
  The race not always to the swift ;
The strong may yield, the good may fall,
  The great man be a vulgar clown,
The knave be lifted over all,
  The kind cast pitilessly down.

Who knows the inscrutable design ?
  Blessed be He who took and gave !
Why should your mother, Charles, not mine,
  Be weeping at her darling's grave ?
We bow to heaven that will'd it so,
  That darkly rules the fate of all,
That sends the respite or the blow,
  That 's free to give or to recall.

This crowns his feast with wine and wit —
  Who brought him to that mirth and state?
His betters, see, below him sit,
  Or hunger hopeless at the gate.
Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel
  To spurn the rags of Lazarus ?
Come, brother, in that dust we 'll kneel,
  Confessing heaven that rul'd it thus.

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,
  Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely kill'd,
Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance,
  And longing passion unfulfill'd.
Amen ! — whatever fate be sent,
  Pray God the heart may kindly glow,
Although the head with cares be bent,
  And whiten'd with the winter snow.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
  Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the awful will,
  And bear it with an honest heart.
Who misses or who wins the prize —
  Go, lose or conquer as you can ;
But if you fail, or if you rise,
  Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old or young !
  (Bear kindly with my humble lays ;)
The sacred chorus first was sung
  Upon the first of Christmas days ;
The shepherds heard it overhead —
  The joyful angels rais'd it then :
Glory to heaven on high, it said,
  And peace on earth to gentle men !

My song, save this, is little worth ;
  I lay the weary pen aside,
And wish you health, and love, and mirth,
  As fits the solemn Christmas-tide.
As fits the holy Christmas birth,
  Be this, good friends, our carol still :
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
  To men of gentle will.

Charles Kingsley

FROM "THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY"

SONG

Oh ! that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze ;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees.

Oh ! that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimm'd down,
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town.

Oh! that we two lay sleeping
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God.

CRUSADER CHORUS

(*Men at Arms pass singing*)

THE tomb of God before us,
Our fatherland behind,
Our ships shall leap o'er billows steep,
Before a charmed wind.

Above our van great angels
Shall fight along the sky;
While martyrs pure and crowned saints
To God for rescue cry.

The red-cross knights and yeomen
Throughout the holy town,
In faith and might, on left and right,
Shall tread the paynim down.

Till on the Mount Moriah
The Pope of Rome shall stand;
The Kaiser and the King of France
Shall guard him on each hand.

There shall he rule all nations,
With crosier and with sword;
And pour on all the heathen
The wrath of Christ the Lord.

(*Women Bystanders*)

Christ is a rock in the bare salt land,
To shelter our knights from the sun and sand;
Christ the Lord is a summer sun,
To ripen the grain while they are gone.

Then you who fight in the bare salt land,
And you who work at home,
Fight and work for Christ the Lord,
Until His kingdom come.

(*Old Knights pass*)

Our stormy sun is sinking;
Our sands are running low;
In one fair fight, before the night,
Our hard-worn hearts shall glow.

We cannot pine in cloister;
We cannot fast and pray;
The sword which built our load of guilt
Must wipe that guilt away.

We know the doom before us;
The dangers of the road;
Have mercy, mercy, Jesu bless'd,
When we lie low in blood.

When we lie gash'd and gory,
The holy walls within,
Sweet Jesu, think upon our end,
And wipe away our sin.

(*Boy Crusaders pass*)

The Christ-child sits on high;
He looks through the merry blue sky;
He holds in His hand a bright lily-band,
For the boys who for Him die.

On holy Mary's arm,
Wrapp'd safe from terror and harm,
Lull'd by the breeze in the paradise trees,
Their souls sleep soft and warm.

Knight David, young and true,
The giant Soldan slew,
And our arms so light, for the Christ-child's right,
Like noble deeds can do.

(*Young Knights pass*)

The rich East blooms fragrant before us;
All Fairy-land beckons us forth;
We must follow the crane in her flight o'er the main,
From the posts and the moors of the North.

Our sires in the youth of the nations
Swept westward through plunder and blood,
But a holier quest calls us back to the East,
We fight for the kingdom of God.

Then shrink not, and sigh not, fair ladies,
The red cross which flames on each arm and each shield,
Through philter and spell, and the black charms of hell,
Shall shelter our true love in camp and in field.

(*Old Monk looking after them*)

Jerusalem, Jerusalem!
The burying-place of God!
Why gay and bold, in steel and gold,
O'er the paths where Christ hath trod?

THE SANDS OF DEE

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!"
The western wind was wild and dank wi' foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land —
And never home came she.

"Oh! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair —
A tress o' golden hair,
A drowned maiden's hair
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee."

They row'd her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea:
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!

THE THREE FISHERS

Three fishers went sailing out into the West,
Out into the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who lov'd him the best;
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there 's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbor bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the light-house tower,
And they trimm'd the lamps as the sun went down;
They look'd at the squall, and they look'd at the shower,
And the night rack came rolling up ragged and brown!

But men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbor bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
For those who will never come back to the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And the sooner it 's over, the sooner to sleep —
And good-by to the bar and its moaning.

A MYTH

A floating, a floating
Across the sleeping sea,
All night I heard a singing bird
Upon the topmast tree.

"Oh, came you from the isles of Greece
Or from the banks of Seine;
Or off some tree in forests free,
Which fringe the western main?"

"I came not off the old world
Nor yet from off the new —
But I am one of the birds of God
Which sing the whole night through."

"Oh, sing and wake the dawning —
Oh, whistle for the wind;
The night is long, the current strong,
My boat it lags behind."

"The current sweeps the old world,
The current sweeps the new;
The wind will blow, the dawn will glow,
Ere thou hast sail'd them through."

THE DEAD CHURCH

Wild, wild wind, wilt thou never cease thy sighing?
Dark, dark night, wilt thou never wear away?
Cold, cold church, in thy death sleep lying,
Thy Lent is past, thy Passion here, but not thine Easterday.

Peace, faint heart, though the night be dark and sighing ;
Rest, fair corpse, where thy Lord himself hath lain.
Weep, dear Lord, where thy bride is lying ;
Thy tears shall wake her frozen limbs to life and health again.

ANDROMEDA AND THE SEA-NYMPHS

FROM "ANDROMEDA"

Aw'd by her own rash words she was still : and her eyes to the seaward
Look'd for an answer of wrath : far off, in the heart of the darkness,
Bright white mists rose slowly ; beneath them the wandering ocean
Glimmer'd and glow'd to the deepest abyss ; and the knees of the maiden
Trembled and sank in her fear, as afar, like a dawn in the midnight,
Rose from their seaweed chamber the choir of the mystical sea-maids.
Onward toward her they came, and her heart beat loud at their coming,
Watching the bliss of the gods, as waken'd the cliffs with their laughter.
Onward they came in their joy, and before them the roll of the surges
Sank, as the breeze sank dead, into smooth green foam-fleck'd marble,
Aw'd ; and the crags of the cliff, and the pines of the mountain were silent.
Onward they came in their joy, and around them the lamps of the sea-nymphs,
Myriad fiery globes, swam panting and heaving ; and rainbows,
Crimson and azure and emerald, were broken in star-showers, lighting
Far through the wine-dark depths of the crystal, the gardens of Nereus,
Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms and the palms of the ocean.
Onward they came in their joy, more white than the foam which they scatter'd,
Laughing and singing, and tossing and twining, while eager, the Tritons
Blinded with kisses their eyes, unreprov'd, and above them in worship
Hover'd the terns, and the seagulls swept past them on silvery pinions
Echoing softly their laughter ; around them the wantoning dolphins
Sigh'd as they plunged, full of love ; and the great sea-horses which bore them
Curv'd up their crests in their pride to the delicate arms of the maiden,
Pawing the spray into gems, till the fiery rainfall, unharming,
Sparkled and gleam'd on the limbs of the nymphs, and the coils of the mermen.
Onward they went in their joy, bath'd round with the fiery coolness,
Needing nor sun nor moon, self-lighted, immortal : but others,
Pitiful, floated in silence apart ; in their bosoms the sea-boys,
Slain by the wrath of the seas, swept down by the anger of Nereus ;
Hapless, whom never again on strand or on quay shall their mothers
Welcome with garlands and vows to the temple, but wearily pining
Gaze over island and bay for the sails of the sunken ; they heedless
Sleep in soft bosoms forever, and dream of the surge and the sea-maids.
Onward they pass'd in their joy ; on their brows neither sorrow nor anger ;
Self-sufficing, as gods, never heeding the woe of the maiden.

THE LAST BUCCANEER

Oh, England is a pleasant place for them that 's rich and high ;
But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I ;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see again,
As the pleasant Isle of Avès, beside the Spanish main.

There were forty craft in Avès that were both swift and stout,
All furnish'd well with small arms and cannons round about ;
And a thousand men in Avès made laws so fair and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.

Thence we sail'd against the Spaniard with his hoards of plate and gold,
Which he wrung by cruel tortures from the Indian folk of old ;

Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as stone,
Which flog men and keel-haul them and starve them to the bone.

Oh, the palms grew high in Avès and fruits that shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to behold;
And the negro maids to Avès from bondage fast did flee,
To welcome gallant sailors a sweeping in from sea.

Oh, sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward breeze
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you while you listen'd to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside that never touched the shore.

But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things must be,
So the King's ships sail'd on Avès and quite put down were we.
All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst the booms at night;
And I fled in a piragua sore wounded from the fight.

Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside,
Till for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young thing she died;
But as I lay a gasping a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here to beg until I die.

And now I'm old and going I'm sure I can't tell where;
One comfort is, this world 's so hard I can't be worse off there:
If I might but be a sea-dove I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once again.

LORRAINE

"Are you ready for your steeple-chase, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe?
Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Baree.

You 're booked to ride your capping race to-day at Coulterlee,
You 're booked to ride Vindictive, for all the world to see,
To keep him straight, and keep him first, and win the run for me."
Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Baree.

She clasp'd her new-born baby, poor Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe,
Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Baree.
"I cannot ride Vindictive, as any man might see,
And I will not ride Vindictive, with this baby on my knee;
He 's kill'd a boy, he 's kill'd a man, and why must he kill me?"

"Unless you ride Vindictive, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe,
Unless you ride Vindictive to-day at Coulterlee,
And land him safe across the brook, and win the blank for me,
It 's you may keep your baby, for you 'll get no keep from me."

"That husbands could be cruel," said Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrèe,
"That husbands could be cruel, I have known for seasons three;
But oh, to ride Vindictive while a baby cries for me,
And be kill'd across a fence at last for all the world to see!"

She master'd young Vindictive — O, the gallant lass was she!
And kept him straight and won the race as near as near could be;
But he kill'd her at the brook against a pollard willow tree;
Oh! he kill'd her at the brook, the brute, for all the world to see,
And no one but the baby cried for poor Lorraine, Lorrèe.

A FAREWELL

My fairest child, I have no song to give you;
No lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray:
Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave you
For every day.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long:
And so make life, death, and that vast forever
One grand, sweet song.

Adelaide Anne Procter

A WOMAN'S QUESTION

Before I trust my fate to thee,
Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future give
Color and form to mine,
Before I peril all for thee, question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
A shadow of regret:
Is there one link within the Past
That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy faith as clear and free as that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
Untouch'd, unshar'd by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost, O, tell me before all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel,
Within thy inmost soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have stak'd the whole;
Let no false pity spare the blow, but in true mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now — lest at some future day my whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
The demon-spirit Change,
Shedding a passing glory still
On all things new and strange?
It may not be thy fault alone — but shield my heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
And answer to my claim,
That Fate, and that to-day's mistake —
Not thou — had been to blame?
Some soothe their conscience thus; but thou wilt surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer *not*, — I dare not hear,
The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
So, comfort thee, my fate —
Whatever on my heart may fall — remember, I would risk it all!

A DOUBTING HEART

Where are the swallows fled?
Frozen and dead,
Perchance, upon some bleak and stormy shore.
O doubting heart!
Far over purple seas
They wait, in sunny ease,
The balmy southern breeze,
To bring them to their northern homes once more.

Why must the flowers die?
Prison'd they lie
In the cold tomb, heedless of tears or rain.
O doubting heart!
They only sleep below
The soft white ermine snow,
While winter winds shall blow,
To breathe and smile upon you soon again.

The sun has hid its rays
These many days;
Will dreary hours never leave the earth?
O doubting heart!
The stormy clouds on high
Veil the same sunny sky,
That soon (for spring is nigh)
Shall wake the summer into golden mirth.

Fair hope is dead, and light
Is quench'd in night.

What sound can break the silence of despair?
O doubting heart!
Thy sky is overcast,
Yet stars shall rise at last,
Brighter for darkness past,
And angels' silver voices stir the air.

THE REQUITAL

LOUD roared the tempest,
Fast fell the sleet;
A little Child Angel
Passed down the street,
With trailing pinions
And weary feet.

The moon was hidden;
No stars were bright;
So she could not shelter
In heaven that night,
For the Angels' ladders
Are rays of light.

She beat her wings
At each window-pane,
And pleaded for shelter,
But all in vain; —
"Listen," they said,
"To the pelting rain!"

She sobb'd, as the laughter
And mirth grew higher,
"Give me rest and shelter
Beside your fire,
And I will give you
Your heart's desire."

The dreamer sat watching
His embers gleam,
While his heart was floating
Down hope's bright stream;
. . . So he wove her wailing
Into his dream.

The worker toil'd on,
For his time was brief;
The mourner was nursing
Her own pale grief;
They heard not the promise
That brought relief.

But fiercer the tempest
Rose than before,
When the Angel paus'd
At a humble door,
And ask'd for shelter
And help once more.

A weary woman,
Pale, worn, and thin,
With the brand upon her
Of want and sin,
Heard the Child Angel
And took her in:

Took her in gently,
And did her best
To dry her pinions;
And made her rest
With tender pity
Upon her breast.

When the eastern morning
Grew bright and red,
Up the first sunbeam
The Angel fled;
Having kiss'd the woman
And left her — dead.

PER PACEM AD LUCEM

I DO not ask, O Lord, that life may be
A pleasant road;
I do not ask that Thou wouldst take from me
Aught of its load;

I do not ask that flowers should always spring
Beneath my feet;
I know too well the poison and the sting
Of things too sweet.

For one thing only, Lord, dear Lord, I plead,
Lead me aright —
Though strength should falter, and though heart should bleed —
Through Peace to Light.

I do not ask, O Lord, that thou shouldst shed
Full radiance here;
Give but a ray of peace, that I may tread
Without a fear.

I do not ask my cross to understand,
My way to see;

Better in darkness just to feel Thy hand
And follow Thee.

Joy is like restless day; but peace divine
Like quiet night:
Lead me, O Lord, — till perfect Day shall shine,
Through Peace to Light.

Dinah Maria Mulock Craik

PHILIP, MY KING

LOOK at me with thy large brown eyes,
Philip, my king!
Round whom the enshadowing purple lies
Of babyhood's royal dignities.
Lay on my neck thy tiny hand
With love's invisible sceptre laden;
I am thine Esther to command
Till thou shalt find a queen-handmaiden,
Philip, my king.

Oh the day when thou goest a-wooing,
Philip, my king!
When some beautiful lips 'gin suing,
And some gentle heart's bars undoing
Thou dost enter, love-crown'd, and there
Sittest love-glorified. Rule kindly,
Tenderly, over thy kingdom fair,
For we that love, ah! we love so blindly,
Philip, my king.

Up from thy sweet mouth, — up to thy brow,
Philip, my king!
The spirit that here lies sleeping now
May rise like a giant and make men bow
As to one heaven-chosen among his peers.
My Saul, than thy brethren taller and fairer,
Let me behold thee in future years!
Yet thy head needeth a circlet rarer,
Philip, my king.

— A wreath not of gold, but palm. One day,
Philip, my king!
Thou too must tread, as we trod, a way
Thorny and cruel and cold and gray:
Rebels within thee, and foes without,
Will snatch at thy crown. But march on, glorious,
Martyr, yet monarch! till angels shout,
As thou sit'st at the feet of God victorious,
"Philip, the king!"

TOO LATE

"DOWGLAS, DOWGLAS, TENDIR AND TREU"

COULD ye come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve ye,
I 'd smile on ye sweet as the angels do:
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Oh, to call back the days that are not!
My eyes were blinded, your words were few:
Do you know the truth now, up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows —
I love you, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true!

Earl of Southesk

(SIR JAMES CARNEGIE)

THE FLITCH OF DUNMOW

Come Micky and Molly and dainty Dolly,
  Come Betty and blithesome Bill;
Ye gossips and neighbors, away with your labors!
  Come to the top of the hill.
For there are Jenny and jovial Joe;
Jolly and jolly, jolly they go,
  Jogging over the hill.

By apple and berry, 't is twelve months merry
  Since Jenny and Joe were wed!
And never a bother or quarrelsome pother
  To trouble the board or bed.
So Joe and Jenny are off to Dunmow:
Happy and happy, happy they go,
  Young and rosy and red.

Oh, Jenny 's as pretty as doves in a ditty;
  And Jenny, her eyes are black;
And Joey 's a fellow as merry and mellow
  As ever shoulder'd a sack.
So quick, good people, and come to the show!
Merry and merry, merry they go,
  Bumping on Dobbin's back.

They've prank'd up old Dobbin with ribands and bobbin,
  And tether'd his tail in a string!
The fat flitch of bacon is not to be taken
  By many that wear the ring!
Good luck, good luck, to Jenny and Joe!
Jolly and jolly, jolly they go.
  Hark! how merry they sing.

"O merry, merry, merry are we,
Happy as birds that sing in a tree!
All of the neighbors are merry to-day,
Merry are we and merry are they.
O merry are we! for love, you see,
Fetters a heart and sets it free.

"O happy, happy, happy is life
For Joe (that 's me) and Jenny my wife!
All of the neighbors are happy, and say —
'Never were folk so happy as they!'
O happy are we! for love, you see,
Fetters a heart and sets it free.

"O jolly, jolly, jolly we go,
I and my Jenny, and she and her Joe.
All of the neighbors are jolly, and sing —
'She is a queen, and he is a king!'
O jolly are we! for love, you see,
Fetters a heart and sets it free."

NOVEMBER'S CADENCE

The bees about the Linden-tree,
When blithely summer blooms were springing,
Would hum a heartsome melody,
The simple baby-soul of singing;
And thus my spirit sang to me
When youth its wanton way was winging:
  "Be glad, be sad—thou hast the choice —
  But mingle music with thy voice."

The linnets on the Linden-tree,
Among the leaves in autumn dying,
Are making gentle melody,
A mild, mysterious, mournful sighing;
And thus my spirit sings to me
While years are flying, flying, flying:
  "Be sad, be sad, thou hast no choice,
  But mourn with music in thy voice."

Mortimer Collins

A GREEK IDYL

He sat the quiet stream beside,
His white feet laving in the tide,
And watch'd the pleasant waters glide
  Beneath the skies of summer.
She singing came from mound to mound,
Her footfall on the thymy ground

Unheard ; his tranquil haunt she found —
That beautiful new comer.

He said — "My own Glycerium !
The pulses of the woods are dumb,
How well I knew that thou wouldst come,
Beneath the branches gliding."
The dreamer fancied he had heard
Her footstep, whensoever stirr'd
The summer wind or languid bird
Amid the boughs abiding.

She dipp'd her fingers in the brook,
And gaz'd awhile with happy look
Upon the windings of a book
Of Cyprian hymnings tender.
The ripples to the ocean raced —
The flying minutes pass'd in haste :
His arm was round the maiden's waist,
That waist so very slender.

O cruel Time ! O tyrant Time !
Whose winter all the streams of rhyme,
The flowing waves of love sublime,
In bitter passage freezes.
I only see the scambling goat,
The lotos on the waters float,
While an old shepherd with an oat
Pipes to the autumn breezes.

KATE TEMPLE'S SONG

Only a touch, and nothing more :
Ah ! but never so touch'd before !
Touch of lip, was it ? Touch of hand ?
Either is easy to understand.
Earth may be smitten with fire or frost —
Never the touch of true love lost.

Only a word, was it ? Scarce a word !
Musical whisper, softly heard,
Syllabled nothing — just a breath —
'T will outlast life, and 't will laugh at death.
Love with so little can do so much —
Only a word, sweet ! Only a touch !

THE IVORY GATE

Sunt geminae Somni portae : quarum altera fertur
Cornea ; qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris :
Altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto ;
Sed falsa ad coelum mittunt insomnia Manes.
Vergil.

When, lov'd by poet and painter,
The sunrise fills the sky,
When night's gold urns grow fainter,
And in depths of amber die —
When the morn-breeze stirs the curtain,
Bearing an odorous freight —
Then visions strange, uncertain,
Pour thick through the Ivory Gate.

Then the oars of Ithaca dip so
Silently into the sea
That they wake not sad Calypso,
And the Hero wanders free :
He breasts the ocean-furrows,
At war with the words of Fate,
And the blue tide's low susurrus
Comes up to the Ivory Gate.

Or, clad in the hide of leopard,
'Mid Ida's freshest dews,
Paris, the Teucrian shepherd,
His sweet Oenone wooes :
On the thought of her coming bridal
Unutter'd joy doth wait,
While the tune of the false one's idyl
Rings soft through the Ivory Gate.

Or down from green Helvellyn
The roar of streams I hear,
And the lazy sail is swelling
To the winds of Windermere :
That girl with the rustic bodice
'Mid the ferry's laughing freight
Is as fair as any goddess
Who sweeps through the Ivory Gate.

Ah, the vision of dawn is leisure —
But the truth of day is toil ;
And we pass from dreams of pleasure
To the world's unstay'd turmoil.
Perchance, beyond the river
Which guards the realms of Fate,
Our spirits may dwell forever
'Mong dreams of the Ivory Gate.

William Allingham

THE FAIRIES

A CHILD'S SONG

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We dare n't go a-hunting
For fear of little men ;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather !

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home, —
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam ;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill-top
The old King sits ;
He is now so old and gray
He 's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses ;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long ;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lakes,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wakes.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig one up in spite,
He shall find the thornies set
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We dare n't go a-hunting
For fear of little men ;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather !

LOVELY MARY DONNELLY

Oh, lovely Mary Donnelly, it 's you I love the best !
If fifty girls were round you I 'd hardly see the rest.
Be what it may the time of day, the place be where it will,
Sweet looks of Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that 's flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are ! and they give me many a shock.
Red rowans warm in sunshine and wetted with a show'r,
Could ne'er express the charming lip that has me in its pow'r.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up,
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup,
Her hair 's the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine ;
It 's rolling down upon her neck, and gather'd in a twine.

The dance o' last Whit-Monday night exceeded all before ;
No pretty girl for miles about was missing from the floor ;
But Mary kept the belt of love, and O but she was gay !
She danced a jig, she sung a song, that took my heart away.

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so complete,
The music nearly kill'd itself to listen to her feet;
The fiddler moan'd his blindness, he heard her so much prais'd,
But bless'd himself he was n't deaf when once her voice she rais'd.

And evermore I 'm whistling or lilting what you sung,
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my tongue;
But you 've as many sweethearts as you 'd count on both your hands,
And for myself there 's not a thumb or little finger stands.

Oh, you 're the flower o' womankind in country or in town;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I 'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way, and see your beauty bright,
And you to be his lady, I 'd own it was but right.

O might we live together in a lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall!
O might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods of grass the only roof, and mud the only wall!

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty 's my distress:
It 's far too beauteous to be mine, but I 'll never wish it less.
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor and low;
But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go!

THE SAILOR

A ROMAIC BALLAD

THOU that hast a daughter
For one to woo and wed,
Give her to a husband
With snow upon his head;
Oh, give her to an old man,
Though little joy it be,
Before the best young sailor
That sails upon the sea!

How luckless is the sailor
When sick and like to die;
He sees no tender mother,
No sweetheart standing by.
Only the captain speaks to him, —
Stand up, stand up, young man,
And steer the ship to haven,
As none beside thee can.

Thou say'st to me, "Stand up, stand up;"
I say to thee, take hold,
Lift me a little from the deck,
My hands and feet are cold.
And let my head, I pray thee,
With handkerchiefs be bound;
There, take my love's gold handkerchief,
And tie it tightly round.

Now bring the chart, the doleful chart;
See, where these mountains meet —
The clouds are thick around their head,
The mists around their feet;
Cast anchor here; 't is deep and safe
Within the rocky cleft;
The little anchor on the right,
The great one on the left.

And now to thee, O captain,
Most earnestly I pray,
That they may never bury me
In church or cloister gray;
But on the windy sea-beach,
At the ending of the land,
All on the surfy sea-beach,
Deep down into the sand.

For there will come the sailors,
Their voices I shall hear,
And at casting of the anchor
The yo-ho loud and clear;
And at hauling of the anchor
The yo-ho and the cheer, —
Farewell, my love, for to thy bay
I nevermore may steer!

A DREAM

I HEARD the dogs howl in the moonlight night;
I went to the window to see the sight;
All the Dead that ever I knew
Going one by one and two by two.

On they pass'd, and on they pass'd ;
Townsfellows all, from first to last ;
Born in the moonlight of the lane,
Quench'd in the heavy shadow again.

Schoolmates, marching as when we play'd
At soldiers once —but now more staid ;
Those were the strangest sight to me
Who were drown'd, I knew, in the awful sea.

Straight and handsome folk ; bent and weak, too ;
Some that I lov'd, and gasp'd to speak to ;
Some but a day in their churchyard bed ;
Some that I had not known were dead.

A long, long crowd —where each seem'd lonely,
Yet of them all there was one, one only,
Raised a head or look'd my way :
She linger'd a moment, — she might not stay.

How long since I saw that fair pale face !
Ah ! Mother dear ! might I only place
My head on thy breast, a moment to rest,
While thy hand on my tearful cheek were prest !

On, on, a moving bridge they made
Across the moon-stream, from shade to shade,
Young and old, women and men ;
Many long-forgot, but remember'd then.

And first there came a bitter laughter ;
A sound of tears the moment after ;
And then a music so lofty and gay,
That every morning, day by day,
I strive to recall it if I may.

HALF-WAKING

I THOUGHT it was the little bed
I slept in long ago ;
A straight white curtain at the head,
And two smooth knobs below.

I thought I saw the nursery fire,
And in a chair well-known
My mother sat, and did not tire
With reading all alone.

If I should make the slightest sound
To show that I 'm awake,
She 'd rise, and lap the blankets round,
My pillow softly shake ;

Kiss me, and turn my face to see
The shadows on the wall,
And then sing "Rousseau's Dream" to me,
Till fast asleep I fall.

But this is not my little bed ;
That time is far away :
With strangers now I live instead,
From dreary day to day.

DAY AND NIGHT SONGS

THESE little Songs,
Found here and there,
Floating in air
By forest and lea,
Or hill-side heather,
In houses and throngs,
Or down by the sea —
Have come together,
How, I can't tell :
But I know full well
No witty goose-wing
On an inkstand begot 'em ;
Remember each place
And moment of grace,
In summer or spring,
Winter or autumn,
By sun, moon, stars,
Or a coal in the bars,
In market or church,
Graveyard or dance,
When they came without search,
Were found as by chance.
A word, a line,
You may say are mine ;
But the best in the songs,
Whatever it be,
To you, and to me,
And to no one belongs.

George Walter Thornbury

THE THREE SCARS

This I got on the day that Goring
Fought through York, like a wild beast roaring —
The roofs were black, and the streets were full,
The doors built up with packs of wool;
But our pikes made way through a storm of shot,
Barrel to barrel till locks grew hot;
Frere fell dead, and Lucas was gone,
But the drum still beat and the flag went on.

This I caught from a swinging sabre,
All I had from a long night's labor;
When Chester flam'd, and the streets were red,
In splashing shower fell the molten lead,
The fire sprang up, and the old roof split,
The fire-ball burst in the middle of it;
With a clash and a clang the troopers they ran,
For the siege was over ere well began.

This I got from a pistol butt
(Lucky my head 's not a hazel nut);
The horse they raced, and scudded and swore;
There were Leicestershire gentlemen, seventy score;
Up came the "Lobsters," cover'd with steel —
Down we went with a stagger and reel;
Smash at the flag, I tore it to rag,
And carried it off in my foraging bag.

MELTING OF THE EARL'S PLATE

Here 's the gold cup all bossy with satyrs and saints,
And my race-bowl (now, women, no whining and plaints!)
From the paltriest spoon to the costliest thing,
We 'll melt it all down for the use of the king.

Here 's the chalice stamp'd over with sigil and cross, —
Some day we 'll make up to the chapel the loss.
Now bring me my father's great emerald ring,
For I 'll melt down the gold for the good of the king.

And bring me the casket my mother has got,
And the jewels that fall to my Barbara's lot;
Then dry up your eyes and do nothing but sing,
For we 're helping to coin the gold for the king.

This dross we 'll transmute into weapons of steel,
Temper'd blades for the hand, sharpest spurs for the heel;
And when Charles, with a shout, into London we bring,
We 'll be glad to remember this deed for the king.

Bring the hawk's silver bells and the nursery spoon,
The crucible 's ready — we 're nothing too soon;
For I hear the horse neigh that shall carry the thing
That 'll bring up a smile in the eyes of the king.

There go my old spurs, and the old silver jug, —
'T was just for a moment a pang and a tug;
But now I am ready to dance and to sing,
To think I 've thrown gold in the chest of my king.

The earrings lose shape, and the coronet too,
I feel my eyes dim with a sort of a dew.
Hurrah for the posset dish! — Everything
Shall run into bars for the use of the king.

That spoon is a sword, and this thimble a pike;
It 's but a week's garret in London belike —
Then a dash at Whitehall, and the city shall ring
With the shouts of the multitude bringing the king.

THE THREE TROOPERS

DURING THE PROTECTORATE

INTO the Devil tavern
  Three booted troopers strode,
From spur to feather spotted and splash'd
  With the mud of a winter road.
In each of their cups they dropp'd a crust,
  And star'd at the guests with a frown;
Then drew their swords, and roar'd for a toast,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

A blue smoke rose from their pistol locks,
  Their sword blades were still wet;
There were long red smears on their jerkins of buff,
  As the table they overset.
Then into their cups they stirr'd the crusts,
  And curs'd old London town;
Then wav'd their swords, and drank with a stamp,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

The 'prentice dropp'd his can of beer,
  The host turn'd pale as a clout;
The ruby nose of the toping squire
  Grew white at the wild men's shout.
Then into their cups they flung the crusts,
  And show'd their teeth with a frown;
They flash'd their swords as they gave the toast,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

The gambler dropp'd his dog's-ear'd cards,
  The waiting-women scream'd,
As the light of the fire, like stains of blood,
  On the wild men's sabres gleam'd.
Then into their cups they splash'd the crusts,
  And curs'd the fool of a town,
And leap'd on the table, and roar'd a toast,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

Till on a sudden fire-bells rang,
  And the troopers sprang to horse;
The eldest mutter'd between his teeth,
  Hot curses — deep and coarse.
In their stirrup cups they flung the crusts,
  And cried as they spurr'd through town,
With their keen swords drawn and their pistols cock'd,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

Away they dash'd through Temple Bar,
  Their red cloaks flowing free,
Their scabbards clash'd, each back-piece shone —
  None lik'd to touch the three.
The silver cups that held the crusts
  They flung to the startled town,
Shouting again, with a blaze of swords,
  "God send this Crum-well-down!"

THE WHITE ROSE OVER THE WATER

EDINBURGH, 1744

THE old men sat with hats pull'd down,
  Their claret cups before them:
Broad shadows hid their sullen eyes,
  The tavern lamps shone o'er them,
As a brimming bowl, with crystal fill'd,
  Came borne by the landlord's daughter,
Who wore in her bosom the fair white rose,
  That grew best over the water.

Then all leap'd up, and join'd their hands
  With hearty clasp and greeting,
The brimming cups, outstretch'd by all,
  Over the wide bowl meeting.
"A health," they cried, "to the witching eyes
  Of Kate, the landlord's daughter!
But don't forget the white, white rose
  That grows best over the water."

Each others' cups they touch'd all round,
  The last red drop outpouring;
Then with a cry that warm'd the blood,
  One heart-born chorus roaring —
"Let the glass go round, to pretty Kate,
  The landlord's black-eyed daughter;
But never forget the white, white rose
  That grows best over the water."

Then hats flew up and swords sprang out,
  And lusty rang the chorus —
"Never," they cried, "while Scots are Scots,
  And the broad Frith 's before us."
A ruby ring the glasses shine
  As they toast the landlord's daughter,
Because she wore the white, white rose
  That grew best over the water.

A poet cried, "Our thistle 's brave,
  With all its stings and prickles;
The shamrock with its holy leaf
  Is spar'd by Irish sickles.

But bumpers round, for what are these
To Kate, the landlord's daughter,
Who wears at her bosom the rose as white,
That grows best over the water ? "

They dash'd the glasses at the wall,
No lip might touch them after ;
The toast had sanctified the cups
That smash'd against the rafter ;
Then chairs thrown back, they up again
To toast the landlord's daughter,
But never forgot the white, white rose
That grew best over the water.

THE JACOBITE ON TOWER HILL

He tripp'd up the steps with a bow and a smile,
Offering snuff to the chaplain the while,
A rose at his button-hole that afternoon —
'T was the tenth of the month, and the month it was June.

Then shrugging his shoulders he look'd at the man
With the mask and the axe, and a murmuring ran
Through the crowd, who, below, were all pushing to see
The gaoler kneel down, and receiving his fee.

He look'd at the mob, as they roar'd, with a stare,
And took snuff again with a cynical air.
" I 'm happy to give but a moment's delight
To the flower of my country agog for a sight."

Then he look'd at the block, and with scented cravat
Dusted room for his neck, gaily doffing his hat,
Kiss'd his hand to a lady, bent low to the crowd,
Then smiling, turn'd round to the headsman and bow'd.

" God save King James ! " he cried bravely and shrill,
And the cry reach'd the houses at foot of the hill,
" My friend, with the axe, *à votre service*," he said ;
And ran his white thumb 'long the edge of the blade.

When the multitude hiss'd he stood firm as a rock ;
Then kneeling, laid down his gay head on the block ;
He kiss'd a white rose, — in a moment 't was red
With the life of the bravest of any that bled.

THE DEATH OF MARLBOROUGH

The sun shines on the chamber wall,
The sun shines through the tree,
Now, though unshaken by the wind,
The leaves fall ceaselessly ;
The bells from Woodstock's steeple
Shake Blenheim's fading bough.
" This day you won Malplaquet," —
" Aye, something then, but now ! "

They lead the old man to a chair,
Wandering, pale and weak ;
His thin lips move — so faint the sound
You scarce can hear him speak.
They lift a picture from the wall,
Bold eyes and swelling brow ;
" The day you won Malplaquet,"—
" Aye, something then, but now ! "

They reach him down a rusty sword,
In faded velvet sheath :
The old man drops the heavy blade,
And mutters 'tween his teeth ;
There 's sorrow in his fading eye,
And pain upon his brow ;
" With this you won Malplaquet," —
" Aye, something then, but now ! "

Another year, a stream of lights
Flows down the avenue ;
A mile of mourners, sable clad,
Walk weeping two by two ;
The steward looks into the grave
With sad and downcast brow :
" This day he won Malplaquet, —
Aye, something then, but now ! "

THE OLD GRENADIER'S STORY

TOLD ON A BENCH OUTSIDE THE INVALIDES

'T was the day beside the Pyramids,
It seems but an hour ago,
That Kleber's Foot stood firm in squares,
Returning blow for blow.

The Mamelukes were tossing
  Their standards to the sky,
When I heard a child's voice say, "My men,
  Teach me the way to die!"

'T was a little drummer, with his side
  Torn terribly with shot;
But still he feebly beat his drum,
  As though the wound were not.
And when the Mameluke's wild horse
  Burst with a scream and cry,
He said, "O men of the Forty-third,
  Teach me the way to die!

"My mother has got other sons,
  With stouter hearts than mine,
But none more ready blood for France
  To pour out free as wine.
Yet still life 's sweet," the brave lad moan'd,
  "Fair are this earth and sky;
Then, comrades of the Forty-third,
  Teach me the way to die!"

I saw Salenche, of the granite heart,
  Wiping his burning eyes —
It was by far more pitiful
  Than mere loud sobs and cries.
One bit his cartridge till his lip
  Grew black as winter sky,
But still the boy moan'd, "Forty-third,
  Teach me the way to die!"

O never saw I sight like that!
  The sergeant flung down flag,
Even the fifer bound his brow
  With a wet and bloody rag,
Then look'd at locks and fix'd their steel,
  But never made reply,
Until he sobb'd out once again,
  "Teach me the way to die!"

Then, with a shout that flew to God,
  They strode into the fray;
I saw their red plumes join and wave,
  But slowly melt away.
The last who went — a wounded man —
  Bade the poor boy good-bye,
And said, "We men of the Forty-third
  Teach you the way to die!"

I never saw so sad a look
  As the poor youngster cast,
When the hot smoke of cannon
  In cloud and whirlwind pass'd.
Earth shook, and Heaven answer'd;
  I watch'd his eagle eye,
As he faintly moan'd, "The Forty-third
  Teach me the way to die!"

Then, with a musket for a crutch,
  He limp'd unto the fight;
I, with a bullet in my hip,
  Had neither strength nor might.
But, proudly beating on his drum,
  A fever in his eye,
I heard him moan "The Forty-third
  Taught me the way to die!"

They found him on the morrow,
  Stretch'd on a heap of dead;
His hand was in the grenadier's
  Who at his bidding bled.
They hung a medal round his neck,
  And clos'd his dauntless eye;
On the stone they cut, "*The Forty-third
  Taught him the way to die!*"

'T is forty years from then till now —
  The grave gapes at my feet —
Yet when I think of such a boy
  I feel my old heart beat.
And from my sleep I sometimes wake,
  Hearing a feeble cry,
And a voice that says, "Now, Forty-third,
  Teach me the way to die!"

John Veitch

THE LAIRD OF SCHELYNLAW

SCHELYNLAW TOWER is fair on the brae,
  Its muirs are green and wide,
And Schelynlaw's ewes are the brawest ewes
  In a' the country-side.

The birk grows there and the rowan red,
  And the burnie brattles down,
And there are nae sic knowes as Schelynlaw's,
  With the heather and bent sae brown.

But wife, three bairns are a' frae him gane,
  Twa sons in a deidly raid ;
And but yestreen his bonnie lass Jean
  In Traquair kirkyard was laid.

A lane auld man in his ain auld keep, —
  What ane could wish him ill ?
Not e'en Traquair wi' his black fause heart
  And his loons that range the hill.

Out in the morn to the muirland dun
  Rode ane frae Schelynlaw's gate,
Into the mist of the hill he rode,
  His errand might not wait.

The opening arms of the grey hill haur
  Folded the rider dim ;
Oh, cloud of the muir ! 't is a gruesome deed
  Ye hide in your misty rim.

Up he made for the Black Syke Rig,
  And round by the Fingland Glen,
But he turn'd and turn'd him aye in the mist ;
  Its glower was as faces of men !

And oft a voice sounded low in his ear,
  "The sun is no' gaun to daw —
For that straik o' blude and that clot o' blude,
  On the breist o' auld Schelynlaw !"

'T was late o' nicht — to the House of Traquair
  A horseman came jaded and rude,
None asked him whence or why he came,
  Nor whose on his hands was the blude.

"But hae ye the Bond ?" said hard Traquair.
  "The Bond i' faith I hae ;
The deid sign nae mair, the lands are thine,
  But foul was the stroke I gae :

"I 've ridden wi' you ower moss and fell,
  In moonlight and in mirk,
And monie a stalwart man I 've hewn, —
  So shrive me, Haly Kirk !

"Lewinshope Tam and Wulrus Will
  I slew, and Jock o' the Ha' ;
But there 's my richt hand to burn in flame,
  Could I bring back auld Schelynlaw !"

Schelynlaw's lands were ne'er bought or sold,
  Yet they fell to the house of Traquair ;
But Jock o' Grieston that rode that morn
  Was ne'er seen to ride ony mair.

High in state rose the noble Earl,
  Well did he please the King ;
He could tell any lie to the States or the Kirk,
  His warrant the signet-ring.

Many a year has come and gone,
  His pride and his power are away,
A graceless son has the old lord's lands,
  And the father's hairs are grey.

The Court is back to Edinburgh town,
  Lairds and braw leddies ride there ;
A dole some give to a bow'd-down man,
  In pity, — 't is auld Traquair !

Jean Ingelow

THE HIGH TIDE ON THE COAST OF LINCOLNSHIRE

(1571)

THE old mayor climb'd the belfry tower,
  The ringers ran by two, by three ;
"Pull, if ye never pull'd before ;
  Good ringers, pull your best," quoth he.
"Play uppe, play uppe, O Boston bells !
Ply all your changes, all your swells,
  Play uppe, 'The Brides of Enderby.'"

Men say it was a stolen tyde —
  The Lord that sent it, He knows all ;
But in myne ears doth still abide
  The message that the bells let fall :
And there was nought of strange, beside
The flight of mews and peewits pied
  By millions crouch'd on the old sea wall.

I sat and spun within the doore,
  My thread brake off, I rais'd myne eyes ;
The level sun, like ruddy ore,
  Lay sinking in the barren skies ;

And dark against day's golden death
She moved where Lindis wandereth,
My sonne's faire wife, Elizabeth.

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews were falling,
Farre away I heard her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along;
Where the reedy Lindis floweth,
Floweth, floweth,
From the meads where melick groweth
Faintly came her milking song—

"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
"For the dews will soone be falling;
Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot;
Quit the stalks of parsley hollow,
Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow,
From the clovers lift your head;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot,
Come uppe, Jetty, rise and follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

If it be long, ay, long ago,
When I beginne to think howe long,
Againe I hear the Lindis flow,
Swift as an arrowe, sharpe and strong;
And all the aire, it seemeth mee,
Bin full of floating bells (sayth shee),
That ring the tune of Enderby.

Alle fresh the level pasture lay,
And not a shadowe mote be seene,
Save where full fyve good miles away
The steeple tower'd from out the greene;
And lo! the great bell farre and wide
Was heard in all the country side
That Saturday at eventide.

The swanherds where their sedges are
Mov'd on in sunset's golden breath,
The shepherde lads I heard afarre,
And my sonne's wife, Elizabeth;
Till floating o'er the grassy sea
Came downe that kyndly message free,
The "Brides of Mavis Enderby."

Then some look'd uppe into the sky,
And all along where Lindis flows
To where the goodly vessels lie,
And where the lordly steeple shows.
They sayde, "And why should this thing be?
What danger lowers by land or sea?
They ring the tune of Enderby!

"For evil news from Mablethorpe,
Of pyrate galleys warping down;
For shippes ashore beyond the scorpe,
They have not spar'd to wake the towne:
But while the west bin red to see,
And storms be none, and pyrates flee,
Why ring 'The Brides of Enderby'?"

I look'd without, and lo! my sonne
Came riding downe with might and main:
He rais'd a shout as he drew on,
Till all the welkin rang again,
"Elizabeth! Elizabeth!"
(A sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.)

"The olde sea wall (he cried) is downe,
The rising tide comes on apace,
And boats adrift in yonder towne
Go sailing uppe the market-place."
He shook as one that looks on death:
"God save you, mother!" straight he saith;
"Where is my wife, Elizabeth?"

"Good sonne, where Lindis winds her way,
With her two bairns I marked her long;
And ere yon bells beganne to play
Afar I heard her milking song."
He looked across the grassy lea,
To right, to left, "Ho, Enderby!"
They rang "The Brides of Enderby!"

With that he cried and beat his breast;
For, lo! along the river's bed
A mighty eygre rear'd his crest,
And uppe the Lindis raging sped.
It swept with thunderous noises loud;
Shap'd like a curling snow-white cloud,
Or like a demon in a shroud.

And rearing Lindis backward press'd
Shook all her trembling bankes amaine;
Then madly at the eygre's breast
Flung uppe her weltering walls again.
Then bankes came downe with ruin and rout—
Then beaten foam flew round about—
Then all the mighty floods were out.

So farre, so fast the eygre drave,
  The heart had hardly time to beat
Before a shallow seething wave
  Sobb'd in the grasses at oure feet:
The feet had hardly time to flee
Before it brake against the knee,
And all the world was in the sea.

Upon the roofe we sate that night,
  The noise of bells went sweeping by;
I mark'd the lofty beacon light
  Stream from the church tower, red and high —
A lurid mark and dread to see;
And awsome bells they were to mee,
That in the dark rang "Enderby."

They rang the sailor lads to guide
  From roofe to roofe who fearless row'd;
And I — my sonne was at my side,
And yet the ruddy beacon glow'd:
And yet he moan'd beneath his breath,
"O come in life, or come in death!
O lost! my love, Elizabeth."

And didst thou visit him no more?
  Thou didst, thou didst, my daughter deare;
The waters laid thee at his doore,
  Ere yet the early dawn was clear.
Thy pretty bairns in fast embrace,
The lifted sun shone on thy face,
Downe drifted to thy dwelling-place.

That flow strew'd wrecks about the grass,
  That ebbe swept out the flocks to sea;
A fatal ebbe and flow, alas!
  To manye more than myne and mee;
But each will mourn his own (she saith);
And sweeter woman ne'er drew breath
Than my sonne's wife, Elizabeth.

I shall never hear her more
By the reedy Lindis shore,
"Cusha! Cusha! Cusha!" calling,
Ere the early dews be falling;
I shall never hear her song,
"Cusha! Cusha!" all along
Where the sunny Lindis floweth,
  Goeth, floweth;
From the meads where melick groweth,
  When the water winding down,
  Onward floweth to the town.

I shall never see her more
Where the reeds and rushes quiver,
  Shiver, quiver;
Stand beside the sobbing river,
Sobbing, throbbing, in its falling
To the sandy lonesome shore;
I shall never hear her calling,
"Leave your meadow grasses mellow,
  Mellow, mellow;
Quit your cowslips, cowslips yellow;
Come uppe, Whitefoot, come uppe, Lightfoot;
Quit your pipes of parsley hollow,
  Hollow, hollow;
Come uppe, Lightfoot, rise and follow;
  Lightfoot, Whitefoot,
From your clovers lift the head;
Come uppe, Jetty, follow, follow,
Jetty, to the milking shed."

SAILING BEYOND SEAS

Methought the stars were blinking bright,
  And the old brig's sails unfurl'd;
I said, "I will sail to my love this night
  At the other side of the world."
I stepp'd aboard, — we sail'd so fast, —
  The sun shot up from the bourn;
But a dove that perch'd upon the mast
  Did mourn, and mourn, and mourn.
    O fair dove! O fond dove!
      And dove with the white breast,
    Let me alone, the dream is my own,
      And my heart is full of rest.

My true love fares on this great hill,
  Feeding his sheep for aye;
I look'd in his hut, but all was still,
  My love was gone away.
I went to gaze in the forest creek,
  And the dove mourn'd on apace;
No flame did flash, nor fair blue reek
  Rose up to show me his place.
    O last love! O first love!
      My love with the true heart,
    To think I have come to this your home,
      And yet — we are apart!

My love! He stood at my right hand,
  His eyes were grave and sweet.
Methought he said, "In this far land,
  O, is it thus we meet?

Ah, maid most dear, I am not here ;
I have no place, — no part, —
No dwelling more by sea or shore,
But only in thy heart."
O fair dove ! O fond dove !
Till night rose over the bourn,
The dove on the mast, as we sail'd fast,
Did mourn, and mourn, and mourn.

THE LONG WHITE SEAM

As I came round the harbor buoy,
The lights began to gleam,
No wave the land-lock'd water stirr'd,
The crags were white as cream ;
And I mark'd my love by candle-light
Sewing her long white seam.
It 's aye sewing ashore, my dear,
Watch and steer at sea,
It 's reef and furl, and haul the line,
Set sail and think of thee.

I climb'd to reach her cottage door ;
O sweetly my love sings !
Like a shaft of light her voice breaks forth,
My soul to meet it springs
As the shining water leap'd of old,
When stirr'd by angel wings.
Aye longing to list anew,
Awake and in my dream,
But never a song she sang like this,
Sewing her long white seam.

Fair fall the lights, the harbor lights,
That brought me in to thee,
And peace drop down on that low roof
For the sight that I did see,
And the voice, my dear, that rang so clear
All for the love of me.
For O, for O, with brows bent low
By the candle's flickering gleam,
Her wedding gown it was she wrought,
Sewing the long white seam.

Robert Dwyer Joyce

CROSSING THE BLACKWATER

A. D. 1603

We stood so steady,
All under fire,
We stood so steady,
Our long spears ready
To vent our ire :
To dash on the Saxon,
Our mortal foe,
And lay him low
In the bloody mire.

'T was by Blackwater,
When snows were white,
'T was by Blackwater,
Our foes for the slaughter
Stood full in sight ;
But we were ready
With our long spears,
And we had no fears
But we 'd win the fight.

Their bullets came whistling
Upon our rank,
Their bullets came whistling,
Their spears were bristling
On th' other bank :
Yet we stood steady,
And each good blade,
Ere the morn did fade,
At their life-blood drank.

"Hurrah ! for Freedom !"
Came from our van,
"Hurrah ! for Freedom !
Our swords — we 'll feed 'em
As best we can —
With vengeance we 'll feed 'em !"
Then down we crash'd,
Through the wild ford dash'd,
And the fray began.

Horses to horses,
And man to man :
O'er dying horses,
And blood and corses,
O'Sullivan,
Our general, thunder'd,
And we were not slack
To slay at his back
Till the fight began.

O, how we scatter'd
  The foemen then, —
Slaughter'd and scatter'd,
And chas'd and shatter'd,
  By shore and glen !
To the wall of Moyallo
Few fled that day :
Will they bar our way
  When we come again ?

Our dead freres we buried,
  They were but few,
Our dead freres we buried
Where the dark waves hurried,
  And flash'd and flew :
O sweet be their slumber
Who thus have died
In the battle's tide,
  Inisfail, for you !

Ellen O'Leary

TO GOD AND IRELAND TRUE

I SIT beside my darling's grave,
  Who in the prison died,
And though my tears fall thick and fast
  I think of him with pride :
Ay, softly fall my tears like dew,
For one to God and Ireland true.

"I love my God o'er all," he said,
  "And then I love my land,
And next I love my Lily sweet,
  Who pledged me her white hand :
To each — to all — I 'm ever true,
To God, to Ireland, and to you."

No tender nurse his hard bed smooth'd
  Or softly rais'd his head ;
He fell asleep and woke in heaven
  Ere I knew he was dead ;
Yet why should I my darling rue ?
He was to God and Ireland true.

Oh, 't is a glorious memory !
  I 'm prouder than a queen,
To sit beside my hero's grave
  And think on what has been ;
And, O my darling, I am true
To God — to Ireland — and to you !

Hamilton Aïdé

REMEMBER OR FORGET

I SAT beside the streamlet,
  I watch'd the water flow,
As we together watch'd it
  One little year ago :
The soft rain patter'd on the leaves,
  The April grass was wet.
Ah ! folly to remember ;
  'T is wiser to forget.

The nightingales made vocal
  June's palace pav'd with gold ;
I watch'd the rose you gave me
  Its warm red heart unfold ;
But breath of rose and bird's song
  Were fraught with wild regret.
'T is madness to remember ;
  'T were wisdom to forget.

I stood among the gold corn,
  Alas ! no more, I knew,
To gather gleaner's measure
  Of the love that fell from you.
For me, no gracious harvest —
  Would God we ne'er had met !
'T is hard, Love, to remember, but
  'T is harder to forget.

The streamlet now is frozen,
  The nightingales are fled,
The cornfields are deserted,
  And every rose is dead.
I sit beside my lonely fire,
  And pray for wisdom yet :
For calmness to remember,
  Or courage to forget.

THE DANUBE RIVER

Do you recall that night in June,
  Upon the Danube river ?
We listen'd to a Ländler tune,
  We watch'd the moonbeams quiver.

I oft since then have watch'd the moon,
  But never, love, oh ! never,
Can I forget that night in June,
  Adown the Danube river.

Our boat kept measure with its oar,
  The music rose in snatches,
From peasants dancing on the shore
  With boisterous songs and catches.
I know not why that Ländler rang
  Through all my soul — but never
Can I forget the songs they sang
  Adown the Danube river.

WHEN WE ARE PARTED

When we are parted let me lie
  In some far corner of thy heart,
  Silent, and from the world apart,
Like a forgotten melody :
Forgotten of the world beside,
  Cherish'd by one, and one alone,
  For some lov'd memory of its own ;
So let me in thy heart abide
  When we are parted.

When we are parted, keep for me
  The sacred stillness of the night ;
  That hour, sweet Love, is mine by right ;
Let others claim the day of thee !
The cold world sleeping at our feet,
  My spirit shall discourse with thine ; —
  When stars upon thy pillow shine,
At thy heart's door I stand and beat,
  Though we are parted.

THE FORSAKEN

She sat beside the mountain springs,
  Her feet were on the water's brink,
And oft she wept when she beheld
  The birds that lighted there to drink ;
She wept : but as they spread their wings,
  Her sweet voice follow'd them on high :
" He will return — I know him well ;
  He would not leave me here to die."

And there she sat, as months roll'd on,
  Unmindful of the changing year ;
She heeded not the sun, or snow,
  All seasons were alike to her.
She look'd upon the frozen stream,
  She listen'd to the night bird's cry :
" He will return — I know him well ;
  He would not leave me here to die."

And still she sits beside the springs,
  And combs the gold drips of her hair ;
Red berries for a bridal crown
  At early morn she places there.
At every shadow on the grass
  She starts, and murmurs with a sigh,
" He will return — I know him well ;
  He would not leave me here to die. "

Joseph Skipsey

MOTHER WEPT

Mother wept, and father sigh'd ;
  With delight a-glow
Cried the lad, " To-morrow," cried,
  " To the pit I go."

Up and down the place he sped,
  Greeted old and young,
Far and wide the tidings spread,
  Clapp'd his hands and sung.

Came his cronies, some to gaze
  Rapt in wonder ; some
Free with counsel ; some with praise ;
  Some with envy dumb.

" May he," many a gossip cried,
  " Be from peril kept ; "
Father hid his face and sighed,
  Mother turned and wept.

THE DEWDROP

Ah, be not vain. In yon flower-bell,
  As rare a pearl, did I appear,
As ever grew in ocean shell,
  To dangle at a Helen's ear.

So was I till a cruel blast
  Arose and swept me to the ground,
When, in the jewel of the past,
  Earth but a drop of water found.

THE BUTTERFLY

The butterfly from flower to flower
The urchin chas'd ; and, when at last
He caught it in my lady's bower,
He cried, "Ha, ha!" and held it fast.

Awhile he laugh'd, but soon he wept,
When looking at the prize he 'd caught
He found he had to ruin swept
The very glory he had sought.

Richard Garnett

THE ISLAND OF SHADOWS

Yes, Cara mine, I know that I shall stand
Upon the seashore soon,
And watch the waves that die upon the strand,
And the immortal moon.

One mew will hover 'mid the drowsy damp
That clogs the breezes there,
One star suspend her solitary lamp,
High in the viewless air.

My straining eyes will mark a distant oar,
Grazing the supple sea,
And a light pinnace speeding to the shore,
And in it thou wilt be.

The empty veins with life no more are warm,
The eyes no longer shine,
The pale star gazes through the pallid form,
What matter ? thou art mine.

The Love which, while it walk'd the earth, could meet
No place to lay its head,
Now reigns unchallenged in the winding-sheet,
Nor fears its kindred dead.

For Love dwells with the dead, though more sedate,
Chasten'd, and mild it seems ;
While Avarice, Envy, Jealousy, and Hate,
With them are only dreams.

I step into the boat, our steady prore
Furrows the still moonlight ;
The sea is merry with our plashing oar,
With our quick rudder white.

No word has pass'd thy lips, but yet I know
Well where our course will be ;
We leave the worn-out world — is it not so ? —
The uncorrupted sea

To cross, and gain some isle in whose sweet shade
Even Slavery is free ;
And careless Care on smoothest rose-leaves laid
Becomes Tranquillity.

Far, far the haunts where, rob'd in gory weeds,
Grim War his court doth hold,
And mumbling Superstition counts his beads,
And Avarice his gold.

But Love and Death, the comrades and the twins,
Uninterrupted reign ;
Where is it that one ends and one begins ?
And are they one or twain ?

And all is like thy soul, pensive and fair,
Veil'd in a shadowy dress,
And strewn with gems more rich were they more rare,
And steep'd in balminess.

No drossy shape of earthliness appears
On the phantastic coast,
No grosser sound strikes the attuned ears
Than footfall of a ghost.

Seclusion, quiet, silence, slumber, dreams,
No murmur of a breath ;
The same still image on the same still streams,
Of Love caressing Death.

So let us hasten, Love! Our steady prore
Furrows the still moonlight;
The sea is merry with our plashing oar,
With our quick rudder white.

THE FAIR CIRCASSIAN

Forty Viziers saw I go
Up to the Seraglio,
Burning, each and every man,
For the fair Circassian.

Ere the morn had disappear'd,
Every Vizier wore a beard;
Ere the afternoon was born,
Every Vizier came back shorn.

"Let the man that woos to win
Woo with an unhairy chin;"
Thus she said, and as she bid
Each devoted Vizier did.

From the beards a cord she made,
Loop'd it to the balustrade,
Glided down and went away
To her own Circassia.

When the Sultan heard, wax'd he
Somewhat wroth, and presently
In the noose themselves did lend
Every Vizier did suspend.

Sages all, this rhyme who read,
Guard your beards with prudent heed,
And beware the wily plans
Of the fair Circassians.

THE BALLAD OF THE BOAT

The stream was smooth as glass, we said:
"Arise and let 's away;"
The Siren sang beside the boat that in the rushes lay;
And spread the sail, and strong the oar, we gaily took our way.
When shall the sandy bar be cross'd?
When shall we find the bay?

The broadening flood swells slowly out o'er cattle-dotted plains,
The stream is strong and turbulent, and dark with heavy rains,
The laborer looks up to see our shallop speed away.
When shall the sandy bar be cross'd?
When shall we find the bay?

Now are the clouds like fiery shrouds; the sun, superbly large,
Slow as an oak to woodman's stroke sinks flaming at their marge.
The waves are bright with mirror'd light as jacinths on our way.
When shall the sandy bar be cross'd?
When shall we find the bay?

The moon is high up in the sky, and now no more we see
The spreading river's either bank, and surging distantly
There booms a sullen thunder as of breakers far away.
Now shall the sandy bar be cross'd, now shall we find the bay!

The seagull shrieks high overhead, and dimly to our sight
The moonlit crests of foaming waves gleam towering through the night.
We 'll steal upon the mermaid soon, and start her from her lay,
When once the sandy bar is cross'd, and we are in the bay.

What rises white and awful as a shroud-enfolded ghost?
What roar of rampant tumult bursts in clangor on the coast?
Pull back! pull back! The raging flood sweeps every oar away.
O stream, is this thy bar of sand? O boat, is this the bay?

THE LYRICAL POEM

Passion the fathomless spring, and words the precipitate waters,
Rhythm the bank that binds these to their musical bed.

THE DIDACTIC POEM

Soulless, colorless strain, thy words are the words of wisdom.
Is not a mule a mule, bear he a burden of gold?

ON AN URN

Both thou and I alike, my Bacchic urn,
From clay are sprung, and must to clay return ;
But happier fate this day is mine and thine,
For I am full of life, and thou of wine ;
Our powers for mutual aid united be,
Keep thou me blithe, and flowing I 'll keep thee.

AGE

I will not rail, or grieve when torpid eld
Frosts the slow-journeying blood, for I shall see
The lovelier leaves hang yellow on the tree,
The nimbler brooks in icy fetters held.
Methinks the aged eye, that first beheld
The fitful ravage of December wild,
Then knew himself indeed dear Nature's child,
Seeing the common doom, that all compell'd.
No kindred we to her beloved broods,
If, dying these, we drew a selfish breath ;
But one path travel all her multitudes,
And none dispute the solemn Voice that saith :
"Sun, to thy setting ; to your autumn, woods ;
Stream, to thy sea ; and man, unto thy death !"

TO AMERICA

AFTER READING SOME UNGENEROUS CRITICISMS

What though thy Muse the singer's art essay
With lip now over-loud, now over-low ?
'T is but the augury that makes her so
Of the high things she hath in charge to say.
How shall the giantess of gold and clay,
Girt with two oceans, crown'd with Arctic snow,
Sandall'd with shining seas of Mexico,
Be par'd to trim proportion in a day ?
Thou art too great ! Thy million-billow'd surge
Of life bewilders speech, as shoreless sea
Confounds the ranging eye from verge to verge
With mazy strife or smooth immensity.
Not soon or easily shall thence emerge
A Homer or a Shakespeare worthy thee.

John Todhunter

THE BANSHEE

Green, in the wizard arms
Of the foam-bearded Atlantic,
An isle of old enchantment,
A melancholy isle,
Enchanted and dreaming lies :
And there, by Shannon's flowing,
In the moonlight, spectre-thin,
The spectre Erin sits.

An aged desolation,
She sits by old Shannon's flowing,
A mother of many children,
Of children exil'd and dead,
In her home, with bent head, homeless,
Clasping her knees she sits,
Keening, keening !

And at her keene the fairy-grass
Trembles on dun and barrow ;
Around the foot of her ancient crosses
The grave-grass shakes and the nettle swings ;
In haunted glens the meadow-sweet
Flings to the night wind
Her mystic mournful perfume ;
The sad spearmint by holy wells
Breathes melancholy balm.
Sometimes she lifts her head,
With blue eyes tearless,
And gazes athwart the reck of night
Upon things long past,
Upon things to come.

And sometimes, when the moon
Brings tempest upon the deep,
And rous'd Atlantic thunders from his caverns in the west,
The wolfhound at her feet
Springs up with a mighty bay,

And chords of mystery sound from the wild harp at her side,
Strung from the heart of poets ;
And she flies on the wings of tempest
Around her shuddering isle,
With gray hair streaming :
A meteor of evil omen,
The spectre of hope forlorn,
Keening, keening !

She keenes, and the strings of her wild harp shiver
On the gusts of night :
O'er the four waters she keenes — over Moyle she keenes,
O'er the sea of Milith, and the Strait of Strongbow,
And the Ocean of Columbus.

And the Fianna hear, and the ghost of her cloudy hovering heroes ;
And the Swan, Fianoula, wails o'er the waters of Inisfail,
Chanting her song of destiny,
The rune of the weaving Fates.
And the nations hear in the void and quaking time of night,
Sad unto dawning, dirges,
Solemn dirges,
And snatches of bardic song ;
Their souls quake in the void and quaking time of night,
And they dream of the weird of kings,
And tyrannies moulting, sick
In the dreadful wind of change.

Wail no more, lonely one, mother of exiles, wail no more,
Banshee of the world — no more !
Thy sorrows are the world's, thou art no more alone ;
Thy wrongs, the world's.

R. St. John Tyrwhitt

THE GLORY OF MOTION

THREE twangs of the horn, and they 're all out of cover !
Must brave you, old bull-finch, that 's right in the way !
A rush, and a bound, and a crash, and I 'm over !
They 're silent and racing and for'ard away ;
Fly, Charley, my darling ! Away and we follow ;
There 's no earth or cover for mile upon mile ;
We 're wing'd with the flight of the stork and the swallow ;
The heart of the eagle is ours for a while.

The pasture-land knows not of rough plough or harrow !
The hoofs echo hollow and soft on the sward ;
The soul of the horses goes into our marrow ;
My saddle 's a kingdom, and I am its lord :
And rolling and flowing beneath us like ocean,
Gray waves of the high ridge and furrow glide on,
And small flying fences in musical motion,
Before us, beneath us, behind us, are gone.

O puissant of bone and of sinew availing,
On thee how I 've long'd for the brooks and the showers !
O white-breasted camel, the meek and unfailing,
To speed through the glare of the long desert hours !
And, bright little barbs, ye make worthy pretences
To go with the going of Solomon's sires ;
But you stride not the stride, and you fly not the fences !
And all the wide Hejaz is naught to the shires.

O gay gondolier ! from thy night-flitting shallop
I have heard the soft pulses of oar and guitar ;

But sweeter the rhythmical rush of the gallop,
The fire in the saddle, the flight of the star.
Old mare, my beloved, no stouter or faster
Hath ever strode under a man at his need;
Be glad in the hand and embrace of thy master,
And pant to the passionate music of speed.

Can there e'er be a thought to an elderly person
So keen, so inspiring, so hard to forget,
So fully adapted to break into burgeon
As this — that the steel is n't out of him yet;
That flying speed tickles one's brain with a feather;
That one's horse can restore one the years that are gone;
That, spite of gray winter and weariful weather,
The blood and the pace carry on, carry on?

Clement Scott

RUS IN URBE

Poets are singing the whole world over
Of May in melody, joys for June;
Dusting their feet in the careless clover,
And filling their hearts with the blackbird's tune.
The "brown bright nightingale" strikes with pity
The sensitive heart of a count or clown;
But where is the song for our leafy city,
And where the rhymes for our lovely town?

"O for the Thames, and its rippling reaches,
Where almond rushes, and breezes sport!
Take me a walk under Burnham Beeches;
Give me a dinner at Hampton Court!"
Poets, be still, though your hearts I harden;
We 've flowers by day and have scents at dark,
The limes are in leaf in the cockney garden,
And lilacs blossom in Regent's Park.

"Come for a blow," says a reckless fellow,
Burn'd red and brown by passionate sun;
"Come to the downs, where the gorse is yellow;
The season of kisses has just begun!
Come to the fields where bluebells shiver,
Hear cuckoo's carol, or plaint of dove;
Come for a row on the silent river;
Come to the meadows and learn to love!"

Yes, I will come when this wealth is over
Of soften'd color and perfect tone —
The lilac 's better than fields of clover;
I 'll come when blossoming May has flown.
When dust and dirt of a trampled city
Have dragg'd the yellow laburnum down,
I 'll take my holiday — more 's the pity —
And turn my back upon London town.

Margaret! am I so wrong to love it,
This misty town that your face shines through?
A crown of blossom is wav'd above it;
But heart and life of the whirl — *'t is you!*
Margaret! pearl! I have sought and found you;
And, though the paths of the wind are free,
I'll follow the ways of the world around you,
And build my nest on the nearest tree!

LILIAN ADELAIDE NEILSON

What shall my gift be to the dead one lying
Wrapp'd in the mantle of her mother earth?
No tear, no voice, no prayer, or any sighing,
Gives back her face made beautiful by birth.

Honor was due to one whose soul was tender,
Whose nature quicken'd at the touch of art;
Now that the struggle 's over, God will send her
Mercy and peace to soothe her troubled heart.

Tears will be shed; for who dare raise the finger
Of scorn when all is buried in the grave?
Some pity near her memory will linger:
Upon life's stormy sea she toss'd — a wave!

Life's weary hill she bravely fell in breasting,
Her work was done; "Oh, take me home," she sighs;
Whisper it low, she sleeps not, "she is resting," —
So fell the curtain, and she clos'd her eyes.

The flowers she lov'd will deck the cross that shows us
Where all remains of what was once so fair.
Yes! she is dead, but still, perhaps, she knows us
Who say "Implora pace!" for our prayer.

They gave love's playthings, who were wont to win her,
As Juliet coax'd to happiness her nurse;
But I, who knew the goodness that was in her,
Place humbly on her grave — this leaf of verse!

Sarah Williams

OMÀR AND THE PERSIAN

THE victor stood beside the spoil, and by the grinning dead:
"The land is ours, the foe is ours, now rest, my men," he said.
But while he spoke there came a band of foot-sore, panting men:
"The latest prisoner, my lord, we took him in the glen,
And left behind dead hostages that we would come again."

The victor spoke: "Thou, Persian dog! hast cost more lives than thine.
That was thy will, and thou shouldst die full thrice, if I had mine.
Dost know thy fate, thy just reward?"
The Persian bent his head,
"I know both sides of victory, and only grieve," he said,
"Because there will be none to fight 'gainst thee when I am dead.

"No Persian faints at sight of Death, — we know his face too well, —
He waits for us on mountain side, in town, or shelter'd dell;
But I crave a cup of wine, thy first and latest boon,
For I have gone three days athirst, and fear lest I may swoon,
Or even wrong mine enemy, by dying now, too soon."

The cup was brought; but ere he drank the Persian shudder'd white.
Omàr replied, "What fearest thou? The wine is clear and bright;
We are no poisoners, not we, nor traitors to a guest,
No dart behind, nor dart within, shall pierce thy gallant breast;
Till thou hast drain'd the draught, O foe, thou dost in safety rest."

The Persian smil'd, with parched lips, upon the foemen round,
Then pour'd the precious liquid out, untasted, on the ground.
"Till that is drunk, I live," said he, "and while I live, I fight;
So, see you to your victory, for 't is undone this night;
Omàr the worthy, battle fair is but thy god-like right."

Upsprang a wrathful army then, — Omàr restrain'd them all,
Upon no battle-field had rung more clear his martial call,
The dead men's hair beside his feet as by a breeze was stirr'd,
The farthest henchman in the camp the noble mandate heard :
"Hold ! if there be a sacred thing, it is the warrior's word."

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Dying, and loth to die, and long'd to die ;
Is there no pity, O my land, my land ?
Is it as naught to you, ye passers-by ?
Will ye not, for a moment, listening stand ?

Who shall come after me, is what ye pray ;
Truly ye have not spar'd me all my days.
Tudor, the grand old race, may pass away ;
Stuart, the weak and false, awaits your praise.

Essex, my murder'd darling, tender one,
Should have been here, my people, but for you ;
Now he but haunts me, — oh, my son, my son !
Would that the queen had err'd, the friend been true.

Dudley, my one one love, my spirit halts ;
Would that it had thine now on which to lean ;
Faulty thou wert, they said ; come back, dear faults, —
Have I not right to pardon, as a queen ?

Truly, 't is hard to rule, 't is sore to love,
All my life long the two have torn my heart ;
Now that the end has come, all things to prove,
I but repent me of my chosen part.

Now to my mother's God, who dwells afar,
Come I, a broken queen, a woman old ;
Smirch'd with the miry way my soul hath trod,
Weary of life as with a tale twice told.
Thou who dost know what ingrate subjects are,
Hear me, assoil, receive me, God, my God.

Lady Lindsay

SONNET

(SUGGESTED BY MR. WATTS'S PICTURE OF LOVE AND DEATH)

Yea, Love is strong as life ; he casts out fear,
And wrath, and hate, and all our envious foes ;
He stands upon the threshold, quick to close
The gate of happiness ere should appear
Death's dreaded presence — ay, but Death draws near,
And large and gray the towering outline grows,
Whose face is veil'd and hid ; and yet Love knows
Full well, too well, alas ! that Death is here.
Death tramples on the roses ; Death comes in,
Though Love, with outstretch'd arms and wings outspread,
Would bar the way — poor Love, whose wings begin
To droop, half-torn as are the roses dead
Already at his feet — but Death must win,
And Love grows faint beneath that ponderous tread !

MY HEART IS A LUTE

Alas, that my heart is a lute,
Whereon you have learn'd to play !
For a many years it was mute,
Until one summer's day
You took it, and touch'd it, and made it thrill,
And it thrills and throbs, and quivers still !

I had known you, dear, so long !
Yet my heart did not tell me why
It should burst one morn into song,
And wake to new life with a cry,

Like a babe that sees the light of the sun,
And for whom this great world has just
begun.

Your lute is enshrin'd, cas'd in,
Kept close with love's magic key,
So no hand but yours can win
And wake it to minstrelsy;
Yet leave it not silent too long, nor
alone,
Lest the strings should break, and the
music be done.

VARIOUS DISTINCTIVE POETS

Thomas Gordon Hake

OLD SOULS

THE world, not hush'd, lay as in trance;
It saw the future in its van,
And drew its riches in advance
To meet the greedy wants of man;
Till length of days, untimely sped,
Left its account unaudited.

The sun, untir'd, still rose and set, —
Swerv'd not an instant from its beat;
It had not lost a moment yet,
Nor used in vain its light and heat;
But, as in trance, from when it rose
To when it sank, man crav'd repose.

A holy light that shone of yore
He saw, despis'd, and left behind:
His heart was rotting to the core
Lock'd in the slumbers of the mind:
Not beat of drum, nor sound of fife,
Could rouse it to a sense of life.

A cry was heard, inton'd and slow,
Of one who had no wares to vend:
His words were gentle, dull, and low,
And he call'd out, "Old souls to
mend!"
He peddled on from door to door,
And look'd not up to rich or poor.

His step kept on as if in pace
With some old timepiece in his head,
Nor ever did its way retrace;
Nor right nor left turn'd he his tread,
But utter'd still his tinker's cry
To din the ears of passers-by.

So well they knew the olden note
Few heeded what the tinker spake,
Though here and there an ear it smote
And seem'd a sudden hold to take;
But they had not the time to stay,
And it would do some other day.

Still on his way the tinker wends,
Though jobs be far between and few;
But here and there a soul he mends
And makes it look as good as new.
Once set to work, once fairly hir'd,
His dull old hammer seems inspir'd.

Over the task his features glow;
He knocks away the rusty flakes;
A spark flies off at every blow;
At every rap new life awakes.
The soul once cleans'd of outward sins,
His subtle handicraft begins.

Like iron unanneal'd and crude,
The soul is plunged into the blast;
To temper it, however rude,
'T is next in holy water cast;
Then on the anvil it receives
The nimblest stroke the tinker gives.

The tinker's task is at an end:
Stamp'd was the cross by that last blow.
Again his cry, "Old souls to mend!"
Is heard in accents dull and low.
He pauses not to seek his pay, —
That too will do another day.

One stops and says, "This soul of mine
Has been a tidy piece of ware,

But rust and rot in it combine,
And now corruption lays it bare.
Give it a look : there was a day
When it the morning hymn could say."

The tinker looks into his eye,
And there detects besetting sin,
The decent old-establish'd lie,
That creeps through all the chinks within.
Lank are its tendrils, thick its shoots,
And like a worm's nest coil the roots.

Like flowers that deadly berries bear,
His seed, if tended from the pod,
Had grown in beauty with the year,
Like deodara drawn to God ;
Now, like a dank and curly brake,
It fosters venom for the snake.

The tinker takes the weed in tow,
And roots it out with tooth and nail ;
His labor patient to bestow,
Lest like the herd of men he fail.
How best to extirpate the weed
Has grown with him into a creed.

His tack is steady, slow, and sure :
He plucks it out, despite the howl,
With gentle hand and look demure,
As cunning maiden draws a fowl.
He knows the job he is about,
And pulls till all the lie is out.

"Now steadfastly regard the man
Who wrought your cure of rust and rot !
You saw him ere the work began :
Is he the same, or is he not ?
You saw the tinker ; now behold
The Envoy of a God of old."

This said, he on the forehead stamps
The downward stroke and one across,
Then straight upon his way he tramps ;
His time for profit, not for loss ;
His task no sooner at an end
Than out he cries, "Old souls to mend !"

As night comes on he enters doors,
He crosses halls, he goes upstairs,
He reaches first and second floors,
Still busied on his own affairs.
None stop him or a question ask ;
None heed the workman at his task.

Despite his cry, "Old souls to mend !"
Which into dull expression breaks,
Not mov'd are they, nor ear they lend
To him who from old habit speaks ;
Yet does the deep and one-ton'd cry
Send thrills along eternity.

He gads where out-door wretches walk,
Where outcasts under arches creep ;
Among them holds his simple talk.
He lets them hear him in their sleep.
They who his name have still denied,
He lets them see him crucified.

On royal steps he takes a stand
To light the beauties to the ball ;
He holds a lantern in his hand,
And lets this simple saying fall.
They deem him but some sorry wit
Serving the Holy Spirit's writ.

They know not souls can rust and rot,
And deem him, while he says his say,
The tipsy watchman who forgot
To call out, "Carriage stops the way !"
They know not what it can portend,
This mocking cry, "Old souls to mend !"

While standing on the palace stone,
He is in workhouse, brothel, jail ;
He is to play and ball-room gone,
To hear again the beauties rail ;
With tender pity to behold
The dead alive in pearls and gold.

In meaning deep, in whispers low
As bubble bursting on the air,
He lets the solemn warning flow
Through jewell'd ears of creatures fair,
Who, while they dance, their paces blend
With his mild words, "Old souls to mend !"

And when to church their sins they take,
And bring them back to lunch again,
And fun of empty sermons make,
He whispers softly in their train ;
And sits with them if two or more
Think of a promise made of yore.

Of those who stay behind to sup,
And in remembrance eat the bread,
He leads the conscience to the cup,
His hands across the table spread.
When contrite hearts before him bend,
Glad are his words, "Old souls to mend !"

The little ones before the font
He clasps within his arms to bless ;
For Childhood's pure and guileless front
Smiles back his own sweet gentleness.
"Of such," he says, "my kingdom is,
For they betray not with a kiss."

He goes to hear the vicars preach :
They do not always know his face,
Him they pretend the way to teach,
And, as one absent, ask his grace.
Not then his words, "Old souls to mend !"
Their spirits pierce or bosoms rend.

He goes to see the priests revere
His image as he lay in death :
They do not know that he is there ;
They do not feel his living breath,
Though to his secret they pretend
With incense sweet, old souls to mend.

He goes to hear the grand debate
That makes his own religion law ;
But him the members, as he sate
Below the gangway, never saw.
They us'd his name to serve their end,
And others left old souls to mend.

Before the church-exchange he stands,
Where those who buy and sell him, meet:
He sees his livings changing hands,
And shakes the dust from off his feet.
Maybe his weary head he bows,
While from his side fresh ichor flows.

From mitred peers he turns his face.
Where priests convok'd in session plot,
He would remind them of his grace
But for his now too humble lot ;
So his dull cry on ears devout
He murmurs sadly from without.

He goes where judge the law defends,
And takes the life he can't bestow,
And soul of sinner recommends
To grace above, but not below ;
Reserving for a fresh surprise
Whom it shall meet in Paradise.

He goes to meeting, where the saint
Exempts himself from deadly ire,
But in a strain admir'd and quaint
Consigns all others to the fire,
While of the damn'd he mocks the howl,
And on the tinker drops his scowl.

Go here, go there, they cite his word,
While he himself is nigh forgot.
He hears them use the name of Lord,
He present though they know him not.
Though he be there, they vision lack,
And talk of him behind his back.

Such is the Church and such the State.
Both set him up and put him down, —
Below the houses of debate,
Above the jewels of the crown.
But when "Old souls to mend !" he says,
They send him off about his ways.

He is the humble, lowly one,
In coat of rusty velveteen,
Who to his daily work has gone ;
In sleeves of lawn not ever seen.
No mitre on his forehead sticks :
His crown is thorny, and it pricks.

On it the dews of mercy shine ;
From heaven at dawn of day they fell ;
And it he wears by right divine,
Like earthly kings, if truth they tell ;
And up to heaven the few to send,
He still cries out, "Old souls to mend !"

THE SIBYL

A MAID who mindful of her playful time
Steps to her summer, bearing childhood on
To woman's beauty, heedless of her prime :
The early day but not the pastime gone :
She is the Sibyl, uttering a doom
Out of her spotless bloom.

She is the Sibyl; seek not, then, her voice ; —
A laugh, a song, a sorrow, but thy share,
With woes at hand for many who rejoice
That she shall utter ; that shall many hear ;
That warn all hearts who seek of her their fates,
Her love but one awaits.

She is the Sibyl ; days that distant lie
Bend to the promise that her word shall give ;
Already has she eyes that prophesy,
For of her beauty shall all beauty live :
Unknown to her, in her slow opening bloom,
She turns the leaves of doom.

Edward FitzGerald

FROM HIS PARAPHRASE OF THE RUBÁIYÁT OF OMÁR KHAYYÁM

OVERTURE

WAKE! For the Sun who scatter'd into flight
The stars before him from the field of night,
Drives night along with them from Heav'n, and strikes
The Sultán's turret with a shaft of light.

Before the phantom of false morning died,
Methought a Voice within the tavern cried,
"When all the temple is prepar'd within,
Why nods the drowsy worshipper outside?"

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The tavern shouted — "Open then the door!
You know how little while we have to stay,
And, once departed, may return no more."

PARADISE ENOW

With me along the strip of herbage strown
That just divides the desert from the sown,
Where name of slave and sultán is forgot —
And peace to Máhmúd on his golden throne!

A book of verses underneath the bough,
A jug of wine, a loaf of bread — and Thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness —
Oh, wilderness were Paradise enow!

Some for the glories of this world; and some
Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
Ah, take the cash, and let the credit go,
Nor heed the rumble of a distant drum!

Look to the blowing Rose about us — "Lo,
Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow,
At once the silken tassel of my purse
Tear, and its treasure on the garden throw."

And those who husbanded the golden grain,
And those who flung it to the winds like rain,
Alike to no such aureate earth are turn'd
As, buried once, men want dug up again.

The worldly hope men set their hearts upon
Turns ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like snow upon the desert's dusty face,
Lighting a little hour or two — was gone.

Think, in this batter'd caravanserai
Whose portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his pomp
Abode his destin'd hour, and went his way.

They say the lion and the lizard keep
The courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahrám, that great hunter — the wild ass
Stamps o'er his head, but cannot break his sleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every hyacinth the garden wears
Dropp'd in her lap from some once lovely head.

And this reviving herb whose tender green
Fledges the river-lip on which we lean —
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely lip it springs unseen!

Ah, my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
To-day of past regrets and future fears:
To-morrow! — Why to-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's sev'n thousand years.

For some we lov'd, the loveliest and the best
That from his vintage rolling Time has prest,
Have drunk their cup a round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

And we, that now make merry in the room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the couch of earth
Descend — ourselves to make a couch — for whom?

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the dust descend;
Dust into dust, and under dust, to lie,
Sans wine, sans song, sans singer, and — sans end!

THE MASTER-KNOT

Up from Earth's centre through the Seventh Gate
I rose, and on the throne of Saturn sate,
And many a knot unravell'd by the road;
But not the master-knot of human fate.

There was the door to which I found no key;
There was the veil through which I could not see;
Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
There was — and then no more of Thee and Me.

Earth could not answer; nor the seas that mourn
In flowing purple, of their Lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven, with all his signs reveal'd
And hidden by the sleeve of night and morn.

Then of the Thee in Me who works behind
The veil, I lifted up my hands to find
A lamp amid the darkness; and I heard,
As from Without — "*The Me within Thee blind!*"

Then to the lip of this poor earthen urn
I lean'd, the secret of my life to learn:
And lip to lip it murmur'd — "While you live,
Drink! — for, once dead, you never shall return."

I think the Vessel, that with fugitive
Articulation answer'd, once did live,
And drink; and ah! the passive lip I kiss'd,
How many kisses might it take — and give!

For I remember stopping by the way
To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay:
And with its all-obliterated tongue
It murmur'd — "Gently, brother, gently, pray!"

Listen — a moment listen! — Of the same
Poor earth from which that human whisper came
The luckless mould in which mankind was cast
They did compose, and call'd him by the name.

And not a drop that from our cups we throw
For earth to drink of, but may steal below
To quench the fire of anguish in some eye
There hidden — far beneath, and long ago.

THE PHANTOM CARAVAN

And if the wine you drink, the lip you press,
End in what all begins and ends in — Yes;
Think then you are To-day what Yesterday
You were — To-morrow you shall not be less.

So when the Angel of the darker drink
At last shall find you by the river-brink,
And, offering his cup, invite your Soul
Forth to your lips to quaff — you shall not shrink.

Why, if the Soul can fling the dust aside,
And naked on the air of Heaven ride,
Wer't not a shame — wer't not a shame for him
In this clay carcase crippled to abide?

'T is but a tent where takes his one-day's rest
A Sultán to the realm of Death addrest;
The Sultán rises, and the dark Ferrásh
Strikes, and prepares it for another guest.

And fear not lest existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Sáki from that bowl has pour'd
Millions of bubbles like us, and will pour.

When you and I behind the veil are past,
Oh but the long long while the world shall last,
Which of our coming and departure heeds
As the Sev'n Seas should heed a pebble-cast.

A moment's halt — a momentary taste
Of Being from the well amid the waste —
And lo! — the phantom caravan has reach'd
The Nothing it set out from — Oh, make haste!

THE MOVING FINGER WRITES

I sent my Soul through the invisible,
Some letter of that after-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd "I myself am Heav'n and Hell."

Heav'n but the vision of fulfill'd desire,
And Hell the shadow of a soul on fire,
Cast on the darkness into which ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

We are no other than a moving row
Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with this sun-illumin'd lantern held
In midnight by the Master of the Show;

Impotent pieces of the game He plays
Upon this checker-board of nights and days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.

The ball no question makes of ayes and noes
But right or left as strikes the Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into the field,
He knows about it all — HE knows — HE knows!

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

And that inverted bowl they call the Sky,
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *It* for help — for It
As impotently rolls as you or I.

AND YET — AND YET!

Yet ah, that Spring should vanish with the rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

Would but the desert of the fountain yield
One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed, reveal'd,
To which the fainting traveller might spring,
As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

Would but some winged Angel ere too late
Arrest the yet unfolded roll of fate,
And make the stern Recorder otherwise
Enregister, or quite obliterate!

Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mould it nearer to the heart's desire!

. . . . . .

Yon rising moon that looks for us again —
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same garden — and for *one* in vain!

And when like her, oh Sáki, you shall pass
Among the guests star-scatter'd on the grass,
And in your blissful errand reach the spot
Where I made one — turn down an empty glass!

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